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HISTORY

OF THE

WAR

WITH

AMERICA, FRANCE, SPAIN,

AND

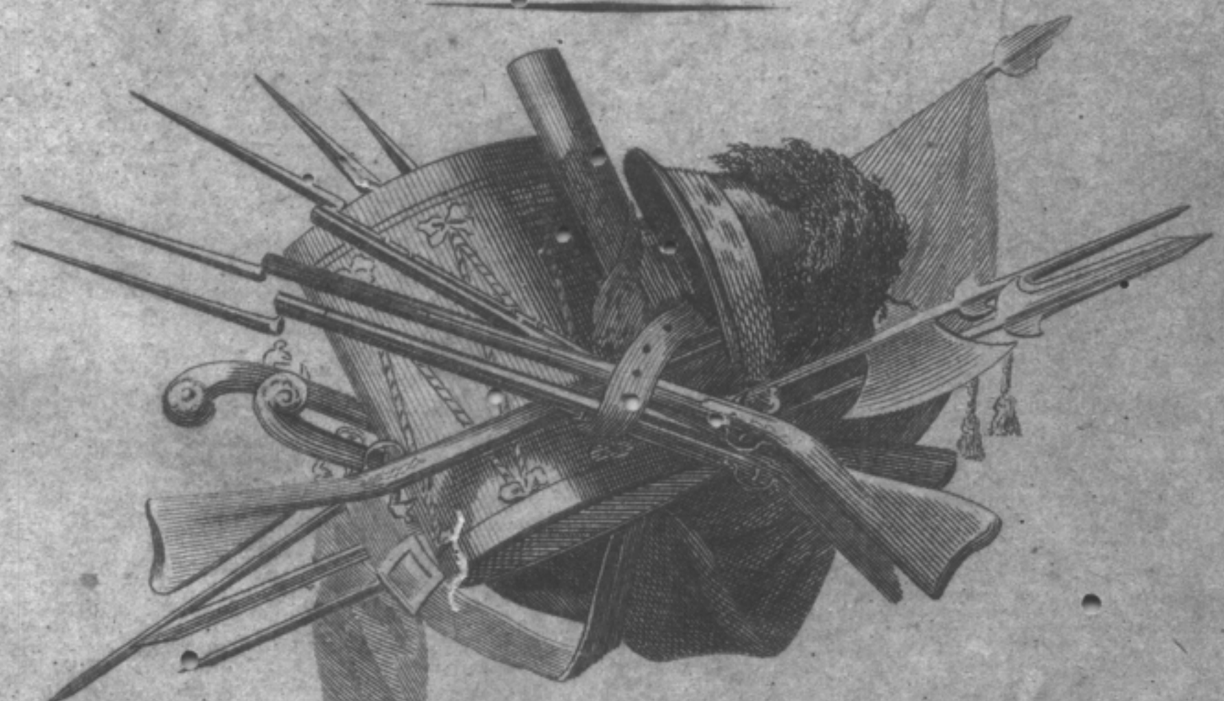
HOLLAND;

commencing in 1775 and ending in 1783

By JOHN ANDREWS L.L.D.

In Four Volumes with Portraits Maps and Charts

Vol. II.



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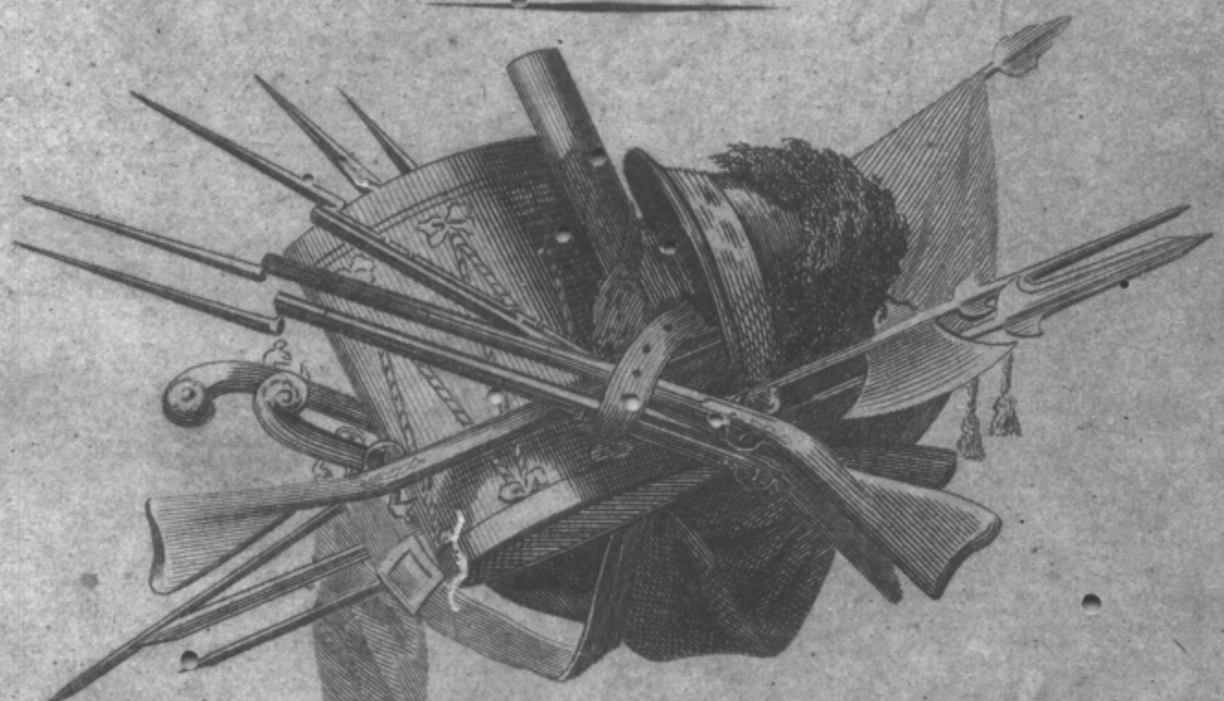

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HISTORY

OF THE

WAR, &c.

CHAP. XVII.

Tranſactions in Great Britain relating to America.

THE Britiſh miniſtry had now engaged the nation in a conteſt, from which it was equally incumbent on them to extricate it with honour, and difficult at the ſame time to recede. The expectations of the public had been highly raiſed by the ſpirit of firmneſs that had been diſplayed in aſſerting the ſupreme authority of the ſtate over all its dominions; and it was not doubted but the moſt efficient plans would be formed and executed, in order to ſuppreſs and overſet at once, every ſcheme and attempt to oppoſe it.

It was therefore with infinite aſtoniſhment and diſſatisfaction, the nation received ſuch repeated intelligence of the ſucceſsful ſtand the Colonies were making every where againſt the forces that had been ſent to compel them to obedience; and that inſtead of having made any progreſs in re-eſtabliſhing the power of Britain, they were unable to keep

the field, and closely besieged themselves in the only town remaining to Britain throughout all her disaffected Colonies.

These were heavy tidings to those who had with such a sanguine assurance predicted an instant submission, on the very first appearance of the British fleets and armies. They were particularly alarming to ministry; who, though they might not expect a ready compliance, never imagined they would have been resisted with so much firmness, and have met with so little success.

The prospect of the reproaches they would infallibly meet with from their Parliamentary opponents, filled them with the greater anxiety, as they were sensible that these had too truly prognosticated what had happened.

And yet their spirit was too great to yield to the first impression of disappointment. They felt too deeply for the honour of the nation, as well as for their own, to give up a contest in which so much was at stake, on so slender a trial. They knew the resources of the country they governed, as well as the disposition of the people, were not to be easily broken. To make concessions therefore to those from whom they had so long required submission, would expose them to the slight of the public, and entirely ruin their reputation.

What bore heaviest upon those who had managed the affairs of the nation since the first commencement of this dispute, was the unsettledness of their determination what measures to take. They had so long hesitated about coercion, and yet had thrown out so many threats, that the Americans foreseeing, *from their own resolution never to accede to the* system of Great Britain respecting them, that matters would undoubtedly come to extremities at last, had in the long interval given them to reflect upon

this

this ſubject, taken effectual meaſures to prepare for them.

It was chiefly this delay and hefitation that the majority of the enemies to the claims of the Colonies reprobated with great aſperity. It was now additionally complained of, as an overſight ariſing from improper confidence; that after vigorous meaſures had been adopted, they had not been duly proſecuted; and that a ſtrength had not been provided ſufficient to put an end to the diſpute at once. It ought to have been ſo powerful, as to have overwhelmed any force that could have been brought to oppoſe it.—By cruſhing the firſt inſurrection, all others would have been prevented, and the very idea of reſiſtance would have ſubſided.

Theſe indeed were complaints of old ſtanding. They had begun with the very altercation itſelf. It had at that time been vehemently aſſerted, that no policy could be worſe than to temporiſe in a buſineſs of this kind: an abſolute deciſion ſhould have been made, either to relinquiſh the claims upon America, or enforce them with the whole might of the empire: this not having been done in proper time, it was now too late to attempt it. Warning had been given to the Colonies, and they had taken it. The blow ſhould have fallen upon them unexpectedly: this might have proved the caſe at firſt, but could not at preſent.

It was argued on the other ſide, that to take ſuch violent and ſudden meaſures, was utterly inconſiſtent with the ſpirit of the Engliſh conſtitution. They who recommended them, forgot that in Great Britain lenity to the ſubject was the firſt maxim of government. To have therefore deviated from it in ſo ſtriking a manner, would have ſubjected the miniſtry to univerſal odium: They would have been repreſented as arbitrary in the extreme, and as aiming to eſtabliſh deſpotiſm over ſo conſidera-

ble a part of the Britiſh dominions, in order to pave the way to the eſtabliſhment of it at home. Imputations of this kind were often objected to miniſters on ſlighter foundations; it was their duty to keep their character clear of them, and to ſtand in as fair a light as poſſible with a people ſo ſuſpicious, and ſo eaſy to provoke as that of Great Britain.

They had, it was true, long born with the petulance and refractorineſs of the Americans; but they were warranted in ſo doing by the hopes they had formed, that their forbearance would be attributed to the conſtitutional cauſe they had mentioned, by thoſe towards whom it was exerciſed; and that theſe would be too prudent, to exaſperate by their intemperate conduct, a nation of which they made a part, and of which they knew the ſpirit and power would not bear ill uſage unrevenged.

But as the mildneſs with which they had acted, had been ſo ill requited, thoſe who had complained of their tardineſs, ſhould now be witneſſes that when rouzed, they could exert themſelves with due vigour for the honour and intereſt of their country. Theſe ſhould be ſupported in ſuch a manner, as ſhould convince the world, that if Britain took a long time to conſider, before ſhe ſuffered reſentment to prevail, yet when it was thoroughly kindled, ſhe was able to make thoſe repent who had dared to provoke her.

The only reaſon why they had deferred putting forth the full ſtrength of the nation, was that the Americans, by becoming convinced that it was in earneſt, might yet have leiſure to ponder on the dreadful dangers they would incur by venturing to encounter it: That were they to prove unequal to ſuch a ſtrife, as it probably would happen, they had no further favour to expect, and would no longer be treated as fellow ſubjects, but as a conquered

quered nation. This was a proſpect which they could not fail to behold in their cooler moments: they ought to reflect, that the ſucceſſes they had met with, were accidental, and owing to fortuitous cauſes, which would not long ſubſiſt. When they ſaw the force of Great Britain approaching in full array, they would then diſcover how arduous a taſk they had undertaken, and begin to think themſelves miſtaken, in rating their ſtrength ſo high as they had been induced to do by ſome unexpected events, which however favourably they might ſeem to omen to their wiſhes, might in the end prove much more deluſive than ſerviceable.

Such were the repreſentations of that party which adhered to the miniſtry. In order to make them good, and effectually to ſilence the animadverſions of delay and want of vigour, to which they had hitherto been expoſed, it was reſolved to proſecute the war Britain was now engaged in, with all the ſtrength and might of which the realm was capable. Such a force ſhould be provided for that purpoſe, as ſhould diſplay to the European world the immenſity of the Britiſh power, and what reſources this kingdom poſſeſſed, when it became neceſſary to employ them. America ſhould ſtand aſtoniſhed at the greatneſs of theſe efforts; and unleſs miſled by wilful infatuation, would clearly perceive the unavailingneſs of all endeavours to withſtand them.

Thus they ſhould compaſs the two points they had moſt at heart; they ſhould reconcile firmneſs with lenity. It would then be acknowledged by all impartial people, that they had behaved with the conſtitutional moderation that became a Britiſh miniſtry; and on the failure of that, had exerted themſelves, as it was their duty to do who directed the affairs of a brave and potent nation.

This manner of reaſoning, and this plan of acting, were, altogether, not unacceptable to the tem-

per of many people at this time. It may be added, that in this country, vigour and reſolution in its rulers are a covering for many deficiencies. No nation that enters into a war, is leſs apt to look back into the proceedings that brought them into it than the Engliſh. They go forward too earneſtly for much retroſpection, and are chiefly intent on proſecuting it with ſpirit. Such a diſpoſition, inclines them to bear with alacrity the diſtreſſes that neceſſarily follow, and to think little of them, provided they are counterbalanced with events that tend to gratify their natural paſſion for glory.

Their pride and high-mindedneſs had been ſeverely checked by the late tranſactions in America. They ſaw a people, who, though joined by the ſtricteſt bonds of fraternal union, were ſtill conſidered by them in a ſecondary light, pretending to a right of equality in every thing they looked upon as moſt valuable and important. This pretenſion had been aſſerted with a vigour and ſucceſs that ſurprized and offended them: they felt themſelves, in conſequence, much leſs diſpoſed to examine the juſtice of their demands, than to make them ſenſible that Engliſhmen were ſtill their ſuperiors.

It had been apprehended, that a ſpeedy diminution of the trade with America would have been the immediate conſequence of hoſtilities; but it happened otherwiſe. The importations from that country, for the payment of their debts, were remarkably abundant this year, and furniſhed their well-wiſhers with well-grounded reaſons to repreſent them as a people whoſe probity rendered them the more highly deſerving of our reſpect, as notwithſtanding they were at the eve of a war with the moſt dangerous enemy they could have to encounter, ſtill they were too honeſt, and too generous, to avail themſelves of ſuch a pretence to defer the ſettlement of their accounts with that very enemy

The

The payment of this balance, together with the uncommon demands from Turkey, and Ruſſia, about this time, brought immenſe ſums of money into the nation, and occaſioned a circulation of trade and buſineſs that kept up for a while the ſpirits of the mercantile claſſes, and prevented any complaints for want of the American commerce.

Add to this, the increaſing neceſſity of large and expenſive ſupplies to the fleets and armies that were waging war at ſuch a diſtance, and in ſo many different parts. The complicated variety of public exigencies was now ſuch, as to afford ſubſiſtence and profit to a multitude of branches. The numerous ſhipping employed for theſe purpoſes, the many contracts, and other beneficial methods of dealing, occaſioned by the meaſures ſo extenſively purſued, made them in ſome reſpects extremely popular. Preſent emoluments effectually hid the proſpect of future detriment; and the crouds that participated in the gains ariſing from all theſe quarters, were not only animated themſelves, but contributed to encourage others in the proſecution of a war that procured them ſo lucrative a maintenance.

But numbers of thoſe commercial individuals, whoſe inſight into the cauſes of the prodigious influx of money that had lately taken place, led them to fear that it would not continue, were as ſtrenuous as ever in their diſapprobation of hoſtilities with America. The majority in the trading towns were of this opinion. The great body of the people ſtill continued divided; but the plurality were inclined to peace. They conſidered the Americans as brethren, and though they were not willing to yield to their threats, and would have gladly ſeen them humbled in the field of battle, yet this proceeded purely from the point of national honour. They would not, with the like ſatisfaction, have ſeen them

deſpoiled of their liberties, and reduced to abſolute and uncontrouled ſubjection.

Such was the diſpoſition of the Britiſh nation in general. Many, indeed, among thoſe that compoſed the middle claſſes, remained in a kind of indifference which way fortune might decide the conteſt. While they wiſhed well to their country, they did not forget, that the welfare of the Colonies was cloſely connected with theirs; and the ſpirit of perſonal independence, ſo natural to Engliſhmen, rendered them indulgent to the claims of a people whoſe pretenſions went no farther than their own.

It was chiefly among the lower denominations, the diſlike of an American war was moſt viſible: as no people in Europe entertain leſs dread and deference for their ſuperiors, and are more ready to thwart and counteract them than the commonalty of England, they ſpoke their ſentiments boldly and without reſtraint, and ſcrupled not to reprobate the conduct of their rulers in terms of the utmoſt acrimony.

The perſuaſion was ſtrong and rooted among this part of the community, that the people of the Colonies were ill treated and oppreſſed, and that they were therefore juſtifiable in defending themſelves. Though this opinion had no influence in the councils of thoſe who governed the nation, yet it was highly prejudicial to the meaſures they were forming. It materially defeated ſome of the principal plans in agitation, by obſtructing thoſe levies of men without which they could not be proſecuted. Never did the recruiting ſervice, in the memory of the oldeſt perſons who had been employed in it, proceed ſo heavily: the reluctance of individuals was ſtriking and peculiar; they not only refuſed the uſual proffers of encouragement, but reprobated, with warmth and indignation, the cauſe in which they were ſolicited

to

to engage, and exerted themſelves to prevent others from engaging.

Neither was this open reprobation of the American war confined to this claſs. The city of London, in its public capacity, teſtified an averſeneſs to it equally acrimonious. When intelligence arrived of the affair at Lexington, the whole city was thrown into commotion. Thoſe murmurs and complaints were renewed that had now diſtracted it for ten years. A remonſtrance and petition were framed no ways inferior for pointedneſs and vehemence of expreſſion, to any that had ever preceded. Animadverſions of the ſevereſt nature were paſſed upon the miniſtry and Parliament, and no cenſures were ſpared upon thoſe who had promoted or adviſed the preſent meaſures.

It was not without difficulty that the more moderate party procured a repreſentation to the Throne, expreſſed in terms more cool and temperate than the former one. It was ſtiled, "an humble petition and addreſs." It lamented the diſturbances in America, together with thoſe meaſures which had occaſioned them. It aſſerted the attachment of the Colonies to Great Britain, and juſtified their conduct upon thoſe principles of freedom inſeparable from its conſtitution. It referred to the various proofs they had given of their readineſs and zeal to aſſiſt this country, and implored a ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities, that ſuch methods to compoſe the unhappy differences now diſtracting the Britiſh empire might be applied, as might terminate in a permanent pacification.

The anſwer to this addreſs was, that while the conſtitutional authority of the kingdom was openly reſiſted by America, it was neceſſary to continue a ſpirited enforcement of thoſe meaſures by which alone the rights and intereſts of the realm could be duly maintained.

In this ſeaſon of diſſention and diſcontent, nothing was more remarkable than the firmneſs with which

ſundry

fundry individuals avowed their adherence to the cauſe of America, and maintained the propriety of their conduct.

Among theſe, no perſon ſignalized himſelf more conſpicuouſly than the Earl of Effingham.—He had from his youth been fond of a military life. Actuated by a ſtrong deſire of improvement, he had ſerved as volunteer in the Ruſſian army in the late war againſt the Turks. Since his return to England, he had conſtantly oppoſed the miniſterial deſigns againſt the Colonies. It happened that the regiment to which he belonged, was one of thoſe which now was ordered out upon that ſervice. His ſpirit was too great, and the ſenſe of his dignity too powerful, to ſuffer him to become inſtrumental in the execution of meaſures which he had ſo explicitly diſavowed and condemned. Impelled by theſe motives, he reſigned his commiſſion, declaring that his honour and his conſcience would not permit him to ſhed the blood of his fellow ſubjects in America, who were contending for their liberties.

The example of a nobleman of ſuch diſtinguiſhed rank, was not without influence. Several officers who were of the ſame opinion, declined acting againſt America. Though their conduct did not paſs uncenſured by many, it met with no leſs a number of approvers. In ſo diſputable a queſtion it was generally allowed, that a man's conſcience and principles were not bound to give way to the maxims of military obedience. • • •

This reſignation was highly applauded by all thoſe who diſſented from miniſtry. It conferred a high degree of popularity on that nobleman. He received the public thanks of the city of London for his behaviour; and was honoured with the ſame teſtimony of approbation and reſpect from the city of Dublin.

Both

Both the metropolis and kingdom of Ireland, were in general averſe to the ſyſtem purſued reſpecting America. That party held a numerous meeting about this time, wherein they declared their diſapprobation of it in the moſt poignant and ſevere terms.

The ſuſpenſion of the ſale and purchaſe of negro ſlaves in the Weſt Indies, and in North America, and the prohibition to export arms and powder, had thrown great impediments in the way of the vaſt trade that had been ſo long carried on to the Coaſt of Guinea from Briſtol and Liverpool. The numerous ſhipping employed heretofore in that branch of buſineſs, were laid up. The ſailors diſmiſſed from the merchant ſervice on this and ſome other accounts, amounted in this latter place to near three thouſand. Their ſituation ſoon rendered them riotous; and the town's people were obliged to call in the aid of the military to quell them.

While the nation was in this ſtate of perplexity, the petition which the Continental Congreſs had drawn up to be laid before the King, was brought over to England by Mr. Richard Penn, Governor of Pennſylvania, and one of the principal proprietors of that Province. He was commiſſioned by the Congreſs to preſent this petition to the King, after which he was directed to give it to the public.

The arrival of this addreſs was a welcome news to thoſe who wiſhed to ſee an end of this unfortunate quarrel. Men in general began to congratulate themſelves, that the application came firſt from America, and hoped that an overture of this kind would be favourably treated, eſpecially as it was reported that the petition was worded in the moſt reſpectful manner, and contained ſome propoſals that tended ſtrongly to remove all obſtacles to a pacification.

But

But this expectation was ſoon diſappointed. On the firſt of September, Mr. Penn and Mr. Lee delivered this petition into the hands of Lord Dartmouth; and on the fourth they were told that no anſwer would be given to it.

A declaration of ſo explicit and poſitive a nature, put a period at once to the hopes of all thoſe who had flattered themſelves that a road had been opened to reconciliation. The Americans in London expreſſed on this occaſion more ſurprize than any other people. They had been informed by their correſpondents in America, that an addreſs to the Throne was on its way to England, the purport of which was of ſo conciliatory a nature, that it was not doubted in the Colonies, it would be productive of ſome good effect. This perſuaſion ſeemed ſo well founded there, that on the ſtrength of it, the Americans, it has been ſaid, began to ſlacken in their military preparations, imagining, that before long they might become needleſs.

It was univerſally agreed, that the language of this celebrated petition was reſpectful, and breathed peace and reconciliation in the higheſt degree. Thoſe who were inclined to give ſatisfaction to the Colonies in the way which they had pointed out in this requeſt, repreſented Lord Dartmouth's anſwer as a final renunciation of all friendly intercourſe with America. This would drive them to thoſe extremities, at which they had hinted in the declaration they had publiſhed to juſtify their taking up arms. They would now be compelled to connect themſelves with thoſe who were beſt able to protect them; and who could blame them for it? Britain drove them, as it were, from her preſence, and even enjoined them total ſilence. What were they to do in ſo mournful an extremity, but depart as they were bidden, and ſeriouſly conſult how to ſhelter themſelves from the impending wrath of an irritated

people, who had plainly given them to underſtand, that they had nothing henceforth to expect but enmity and vengeance?

Was this, ſaid they, a proper manner of receiving the decent and humble ſupplication of three millions of men, inhabiting a rich, fertile, and extenſive country, whoſe wealth, populouſneſs, and importance, were daily increaſing, and were already become the wonder of the univerſe? Who ever could have ſuggeſted ſuch an anſwer, was either a ſecret foe to the Britiſh nation, or was urged by ſome fatal and unaccountable infatuation, to view every circumſtance relating to Great Britain and America, in a falſe and erroneous light.

This anſwer, ſaid they, involved three things that America had long wiſhed, and made her utmoſt efforts to keep at the remoteſt diſtance: theſe were the neceſſity now impoſed upon them to renounce their allegiance, to declare themſelves independent, and to ſeek a foreign connection. The firſt they were in a manner commanded to do, the ſecond was a natural conſequence of the firſt, and the third was the neceſſary reſult of both. It was not to be imagined that after ſo terrible an ultimatum as they had heard, they could, in prudence and juſtice to themſelves, neglect any means to ſecure their country and its intereſts from the dangers with which they were evidently threatened.

Such were the repreſentations made by the Americans and their adherents on this occaſion. Nor were they wanting in further animadverſions on the reply given to their petition. It was, in their opinion, not only injudicious, and tending to perpetuate an enmity, which it ſeriouſly behoved both ſides to conclude, but it was in the higheſt degree ill-timed, and ill-agreeing with the preſent ſituation of the Britiſh affairs in America.

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Had that country been overrun and thoroughly ſubdued by the arms of Britain, ſuch an anſwer even then, would not have become a humane conqueror; but it was neither conquered nor yet had ſuffered a ſingle defeat. The troops ſent to reduce them, were, on the contrary, cooped up in a narrow ſpace, where they found it difficult to maintain their ground. They were at this hour enduring all the extremities of a cloſe ſiege, a prey to ſickneſs and famine, depreſt with continual toils and fatigue, and every hour expecting to be aſſaulted by a juſtly irritated enemy, and in danger of being either put to the ſword, or compelled to ſurrender, and lay down their arms for the preſervation of their lives.

Was this a ſeaſon to aſſume the ſtile of victory and conqueſt? What grounds had Britain to flatter herſelf that an alteration would not fail to take place? America had ſhown that even in the very outſet of her military exertions, ſhe was no deſpicable enemy: ſhe had faced the braveſt troops of Britain, on the very firſt day that blood was ſhed, with an intrepidity which was even acknowleded by thoſe very troops. She had, on the next occaſion that offered, repulſed them with ſuch a ſlaughter, as, conſidering their number, no army had hardly ever experienced. They remembered and felt the conſequences of it to the preſent moment.

The Americans had not loſt ſight of thoſe two memorable days. If they had ſpirit ſufficient then to meet in fight thoſe enemies, whoſe valour was ſo univerſally acknowledged, and whoſe ſuperiority in arms they had ſo much reaſon to dread; ſurely now that they had proved themſelves not unworthy to combat with them, it could not be preſumed in England that the terror of future conflicts and dangers was able to daunt them.

To inſult the Americans was not the way to conciliate or to terrify them. They had ſtrove, with

all their might, to bring about a return of friendſhip; and even while ſucceſsful, had foregone all advantages, and humbled themſelves before Great Britain, in hope of ſoothing her into gentleneſs and conciliation; but if ſhe could ſpurn them from her feet, even in the hour of her own diſappointment, and while the fate of war hung in ſuſpenſe, what would her treatment of them have been, had fortune declared in her favour? Let the impartial world decide, whether Britain had henceforth any right to expect ſo ſubmiſſive an application as the preſent, if indeed any application at all.

America had, however, by ſtooping ſo low, acquitted herſelf of a child's duty in the utmoſt acceptation of the meaning: ſhe had, in a manner, kiſſed the rod that had ſtruck her ſo ſeverely. If, after this proof of dutifulneſs, the parent ſtate retained her unfeelingneſs, and was reſolved to repeat her blows, would any that were unprejudiced, aſſert that America, thus uſed, ought ſtill to proſtrate herſelf at the feet of Britain?

Such were the comments made upon the anſwer given to the petition. After repreſenting the diſpoſition of the generality of the European nations in favour of America, it is almoſt needleſs to mention that they blamed the rejection of this addreſs, as much as the Americans themſelves, and thought that the faireſt and moſt auſpicious opportunity was now loſt of terminating this unfortunate conteſt to the ſatisfaction of both parties.

But the favourers of miniſtry warmly reprobated theſe allegations, as mere pretences and deceptions. True it was, they argued, the Colonies had approached the Throne with every appearance of reſpect; but what had they offered? Obedience to its injunctions? Repentance for their unruline ſs? Or aſſurances of future compliance or ſubmiſſion? Theſe alone were the teſt of their ſincerity: without

theſe, they ſtill remained in a ſtate of refractorineſs, which the dignity of government could not countenance conſiſtently with its own rights and claims. Were Britain to treat with them, while they had in arms their hands, it would produce two effects which would prove eſſentially derogatory to her ſupermacy; it would place them on a footing of equality, and would teach them to recur to violence whenever they had a point to carry.

When the petition was viewed coolly and impartially, it offered nothing that could be accepted with propriety. Inſtead of obedience, it propoſed ſtipulations; where repentance was expected, their conduct was juſtified; and for aſſurances of good behaviour, they demanded conceſſions. Were theſe proofs of a deſire to be reconciled upon any terms but their own; and were not theſe the very cauſe of the conteſt? Was it not in oppoſition to ſuch terms that Britain had armed, and taken the neceſſary determination to do herſelf juſtice? Muſt ſhe now ſubmit to the mortification of laying her juſt anger aſide, and receive with open arms her revolted ſubjects, while they ſtill continued refractory, and threatened her with a continuance of their reſiſtance, unleſs ſhe tamely ſubſcribed to their propoſals?

It was eaſy for people, in the vehemence of their attachment to any cauſe, to varniſh it over in ſuch a manner, as to make the wrong appear the right ſide of the queſtion: But nothing could be more ſimple and clear than the caſe between Great Britain and her Colonies. Was ſhe not the ſovereign ſtate? Did they not profeſs hommage and loyalty to her? What could theſe words mean, but compliance with her injunctions, unleſs they were evidently unreaſonable and oppreſſive? But the altercation was not about their rectitude or impropriety; it was merely whether they ſhould be complied with at any rate;

ſate; it was a refuſal to obey any commands, however juſt and judicious, unleſs they thought proper to admit them.

In ſuch a caſe no Prince or State in Europe would quietly put up with an indignity of ſo glaring a nature. Was the caſe their own, they would have acted with tenfold the diligence and vigour that Great Britain had diſplayed on the preſent occaſion. They affected indeed to commiſerate the treatment of the Britiſh Coloniſts; But who did not perceive their drift? Envy of the proſperity and grandeur of Britain, was at the bottom of all this pretended concern: Its aim was to excite the Coloniſts to come to an irreconcilable rupture with their parent ſtate, and to diſmember themſelves from her dominion. This was the ſole intent of that oſtentatious zeal they had lately exhibited in their favour. As they had not ſucceeded in their various endeavours to overturn or weaken the power of Great Britain, they were now intent upon availing themſelves of its inteſtine diſſentions; and hoped to compaſs by means of them what they had not been able to effect of themſelves.

Such were the warm friends to whom the Coloniſts looked with ſo much thankfulneſs for their partiality; their friendſhip conſiſted in ſpiriting them up to proceed in a quarrel, which would involve them in blood and deſtruction; and of which the iſſue, whether proſperous or fatal to them, would ſtill forward the ends of theſe zealous patrons; which was the diminution of the greatneſs of Britain, by whatever means it could be accompliſhed.

Was it to reward this patronage they were ſo ready to make a ſacrifice of their real and ſubſtantial intereſts? Much it was to be feared, that America would become the victim of ſeduction. Led away by the ſubtlety of inſidious and falſe-hearted abettors of their reſiſtance to their old and trueſt

friends, and intoxicated by that incenſe of applauſe which was ſo fulſomely profuſed upon them from every part of the world that was inimical to Britain, it was, unhappily for the Coloniſts, to be apprehended that they would become the blind inſtruments of European craft and policy. Were they to ſucceed in thoſe deſigns, which it was well known were prompted to them from more quarters than one, they would have done no more than avenged at their own coſt, the cauſe of thoſe nations that had ſuffered ſo many humiliations from Britain, withqut reaping any benefit to themſelves.

Who could tell whether this petition, of which the merit was rated ſo high, was not the joint ſcheme of the Americans and their European abettors, in order to gain time by means of the deliberations that would follow, in caſe of its favourable acceptance? Theſe, when once begun, might eaſily be extended to a convenient length, and afford ample leiſure to perfect thoſe preparations that would be requiſite to face the efforts that were expected on the ſide of Britain.

The Americans began to be ſenſible, that although the firſt ſteps taken by the Britiſh miniſtry had not anſwered its expectation, yet it would follow up the determination taken to reduce them to reaſon, with unabated ſpirit. They knew, that with all their boaſtings, the plans they had commenced were not yet brought to any degree of conſiſtency; and that without ſome further allowance of time and care, they ſhould not place themſelves on that footing which was requiſite to maintain their ground, and keep poſſeſſion of the advantages they had gained.

Whether therefore the petition was a meaſure ſuggeſted to them by others, or was their own ſpontaneous production, mattered little at the preſent. It could evidently anſwer no other purpoſe than that

of procraſtination, which was now ſo oppoſite to the views and intereſt of Great Britain, that nothing tending to indeciſion or delay was any longer admiſſible. The Colonies were fully acquainted with the conditions upon which they would be reſtored to peace and favour. It was hourly in their power to arreſt the operations of war, by ſignifying their acceptance of them. Until they conſented to theſe conditions, the miſchiefs occaſioned by hoſtilities ought to be reputed their own ſeeking, and Britain was acting no other part than that of a lawful ſovereign enforcing obedience from rebellious ſubjects.

Would it be prudent, after incurring ſuch a prodigious expence in fitting out fleets and arraying armies, to ſuſpend their operations upon a bare uncertainty? The petition was no more at beſt: it promiſed nothing, and it offered nothing. Specifications were ſtudiouſly, though perceptibly avoided; all was left to the chance of negociations: but theſe, it was well known, and taught in the ſchool of politics, were beſt forwarded by arms. While they were carried on in the cabinet alone, length and tediouſneſs attended them, and their final concluſion was always made in the field.

Let this therefore decide this troubleſome and perplexing buſineſs. Let the Americans be convinced at once of the ineffectualneſs of their endeavours to terrify Great Britain out of her juſt claims. Let them learn the difference between a ſtate of obedience and tranquility, and a ſtate of reſiſtance and confuſion. After experiencing the happineſs of the one, and the miſeries of the other, they would be better diſpoſed to liſten to terms of accommodation, than while they were fluſhed with apparent ſucceſſes, and had not yet felt the heavy weight of that power which they had provoked.

Beſides theſe motives, there were others equally well-founded and warrantable. When people are

guilty of rebellion without juſt cauſes, government has not only a right to puniſh, but to derive ſome benefit from the puniſhment, as an atonement to the community, and as an indemnification for the damages it may have ſuſtained. Both theſe would be given up, were Britain to deſiſt from the purſuit of the meaſures wherein ſhe was now ſo deeply engaged.

It was the duty of government not only to chaſtiſe the refractory, but to reward its adherents.—Theſe two maxims were the fundamental ſupport of all good government. It was by relaxing in the one, and neglecting the other, that diſturbances commonly aroſe. The obſtreperouſneſs of the multitude could never be effectually curbed without making examples of the promoters of ſedition; the more expeditiouſly this was done, the ſooner, it was evident, an end would be put to inſurrections, and to the unhappy neceſſity of multiplying puniſhments.

When people were not to be ruled by fair means, they deſerved compulſory treatment. This was the caſe of the Americans. Now was the time to rivet their ſubmiſſion, without leaving it in their power ever again to attempt any reſiſtance. Their diſpoſition and their principles were experimentally ſuch, that it was nugatory to truſt to treaties for a permanency of peace in that country. Nothing but force would keep them in ſubjection from this day: they would remain wavering and unfixed in their obedience, until they had learned by experience that Britain was able to enforce it.

This force, and this ability, were now in the hands of Britain. Would ſhe be ſo ill adviſed as to throw them away unemployed? She had at a vaſt expence duly prepared herſelf for the arduous trial impoſed upon her by her rebellious ſubjects. Ought ſhe not, by exerting properly the formidable power

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ſhe now poſſeſſed, to extinguiſh the propenſity, by eradicating the very means and poſſibility to cauſe any more rebellions?

The preſent ſituation of Britain required that ſhe ſhould not recede. The government was in treaty with foreign Princes for the hire of conſiderable forces. what a figure ſhould we make in their eyes, if after ſettling the terms with them, we ſhould break our agreement? Would they not have reaſon to tax us with ficklenefs and tergiverſation,—with want of ſpirit and perſeverance? Would they not repreſent us as a people void of all firmneſs and conſiſtency in our plans, and unworthy of confidence? Should this country hereafter need aſſiſtance of this kind, from whom could it be aſked or expected?

As it would therefore be a national degradation to deceive thoſe, who relying on our determination and good faith, had engaged to ſupply us with troops; ſo it would be an argument of tameneſs and timidity, to ſhrink from the reſolution we had ſo loudly proclaimed of chaſtiſing the inſolence of our revolted Coloniſts. All Europe was waiting for the execution of our threats; and it would lower us ſtill more in the eſtimation of the world, to deſiſt from, than to fail in the attempt. We ſhould be accuſed of weakneſs and imbecility in our councils, and ſhould loſe that eſteem and reſpect in foreign courts, which the proudeſt of them cannot refuſe to a ſpirited, though unſucceſsful people; but which the moſt inſignificant will deny to a ſtate that acts with timorouſneſs and inconſiſtency.

What now remained to be done, was perhaps leſs difficult than what had preceded. It was no eaſy taſk to throw off the remembrance of thoſe ties that linked us to a nation, which, though ſeated on the the other ſide of the Atlantic, was a part of ourſelves. Like a parent whoſe feelings ſuſpend the puniſhment of an undutiful child, we had borne

for years the refractorineſs and diſobedience of our Colonies, from an earneſt deſire and hope that they would return to their duty. Neceſſity had at length overcome our reluctance to exerciſe our reſentment. We were convinced of the propriety of delaying it no longer; and having, againſt our inclination, our temper, and our wiſhes, brought ourſelves to this indiſpenſible meaſure, we ought in wiſdom, and juſtice to our deareſt intereſts, ſteadily to perſiſt in it, however diſpleaſing and repugnant to our feelings.

It was therefore incumbent on us, now we had begun, to make the Americans ſenſible of the ſuperior dignity of the Britiſh nation, and to impreſs them at the ſame time with the terror of our arms. The firſt would be effected by continuing firmly to inſiſt upon their accepting of the terms we had offered; the ſecond, by purſuing vigorouſly the meaſures that had been reſolved upon to enforce them

Another motive preſented itſelf, highly deſerving of conſideration. The language of the miniſtry had for a long time paſt held out to the nation the falleſt ideas and expectations of war: the ſpirit of the people had been rouſed accordingly, and they were now prepared for action. The armaments that were fitting out, the forces that were raiſing, had put an end to the pacific diſpoſition that had ſo long governed their minds in all matters relating to America; they too began to think, as well as the government, that it was time to aſſert the ſovereignty of Great Britain over her Colonies. Even thoſe who did not heartily coincide with the miniſterial views, did not imagine, that after making ſuch immenſe prepararations, it would argue much prudence in them to retract their determinations. This would ſubject them to the cenſure of all parties: the friends to America would blame them for the heavy charges they had brought upon the public

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unneceſſarily, and when, without incurring the leaſt expence, a ſincere and ſpeedy reconciliation might have been effected between Great Britain and her Colonies. They would be then accuſed of incapacity, and of having neglected the due means of ending the diſcord ſo long ſubſiſting between them.

In the mean time were America to reſume her operations of reſiſtance, as they were entirely perſuaded would be the caſe on the very firſt occaſion, they would be univerſally loaded with reproaches, for having ſuffered the critical moment to paſs when the ſtrength of the nation was collected, and its ſpirit animated by a variety of motives, to exert its moſt reſolute endeavours, and to ſtrain every nerve in order to compel America to ſubmit to the terms impoſed by Great Britain.

Now, therefore, was the fortunate opportunity of making the moſt of the courage and reſources of this country. The temper of the people was favourable; every thing was ready to ſecond it that depended upon the care of government. Were miniſtry to be tardy, or to betray any ſympton of change in their ſyſtem, the public would be diſappointed in the higheſt degree, and would be totally diſguſted at ſuch uncertainty and fluctuation in their rulers: they would withdraw their confidence from them; and ſhould theſe, on a conviction of their miſtake, return to the ſyſtem they had forſaken, they would, in all likelihood, find no ſupporters of their meaſures from the miſtruſt they would have drawn upon themſelves, through their want of firmneſs and conſtancy.

It was clear from every proof that could be looked upon as valid, that a large majority of the Britiſh nation coincided with the views of government: Addreſſes came up from all quarters of the kingdom, warmly deciſive in favour of the moſt determined and active meaſures againſt America. While

the ſenſe of the nation was ſo general and ſo poſitive in its concurrence with the conduct adopted by miniſtry, theſe would be guilty of a moſt unpardonable error if they omitted to improve ſo auſpicious an opportunity of accompanying the execution of their deſigns with all the energy and extent of which it was ſuſceptible, and of ſecuring the completeſt ſucceſs to them, ſo far as it was poſſible to confer ſuch a ſecurity on tranſactions wherein fortune, after all the exertions of human wiſdom, would ſtill have the final deciſion.

Such were the motives alledged, in vindication of the refuſal to give any anſwer to the petition from Congreſs. No incident whatever, ſince the beginning of the conteſt, occaſioned more cenſure on the part of oppoſition, and was juſtified with more warmth on the other.

One of the moſt unhappy conſequences of the fatal quarrel between Great Britain and her Colonies, was, that it revived that ſpirit of party which had been in ſome meaſure ſuppreſſed ſince the acceſſion of the preſent royal family to the Throne of theſe kingdoms. It had long been imagined that the diſtinction of Whig and Tory had been dropped for ever, and that whatever altercations might ariſe, theſe nominal badges would never again come into uſe to mark the reſpective contendants.

But this unhappy æra ſeemed, as it were, deſigned to recall them from oblivion with their attendant evils: the violence and inveteracy that marked the civil diſſentions in England, during the latter years of Queen Anne, after laying dormant upwards of ſixty years, were now renewed with no leſs vehemence and fury. One would have thought, from the bitterneſs and rancour that attended the continual bickerings, daily taking place between private individuals, that not only America, but

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England itſelf, would at length become a ſcene of mutual hoſtilities.

The tories were accuſed of promoting thoſe ſanguinary addreſſes, as they were called, which encouraged the ravaging of America, and the ſhedding of the blood of their fellow ſubjects for aſſerting their liberties: they, it was ſaid, were the great miſinformers of government: the falſe repreſentations they were ſtudiouſly procuring from all quarters, of the temper and inclinations of the community, had more than any other cauſe contributed to feed the flame of civil war.

Their attachment to the Stuart family, and to thoſe principles which the Princes of that name had ſo notoriouſly foſtered to their own perdition, was eradicable from them, notwithſtanding the dreadful conſequences which the upholding of theſe pernicious principles had produced, both to themſelves and to thoſe in favour of whom they maintained them with ſo much obſtinacy.

England had, through their unfortunate machinations, been made a field of blood in the laſt century, and had been perpetually tottering on the brink of ruin from the period of the reſtoration till that of the revolution; when the more ſenſible part of the nation, wearied out with ſuch inceſſant attempts to enſlave them, took the reſolution to expel an ill-adviſed monarch, whom the fate of his father could not prevent from treading in the ſame ſteps that brought him to ruin.

The tories, it was ſaid, were a race of men whom experience could not cure. They had beheld reiterated proofs of the miſchief unavoidably reſulting from their maxims; and yet they adhered to them with as much conſtancy, as if they had been productive of the greateſt benefits.

Whenever the evil ſtar of England had ſuffered them to predominate, diſgrace had been the certain

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conſequence abroad, and diſſention at home. The only object they ever had in view, was the eſtabliſhment and propagation of their tenets: ſo zealous were they in theſe matters, that they laboured for them alone: the honour and intereſt of the nation were entirely out of their thoughts: theſe they would readily ſacrifice for the accompliſhment of their ſchemes. Without expatiating on ſubjects that had filled the kingdom with indignation, it was ſufficient to remind the public of the fatal epocha of the peace of Utrecht, when, after waging a triumphant war of twelve years, and reſcuing Europe from the deſpotic influence and controul of France, all the advantages that might have been obtained, were loſt by thoſe feuds which they occaſioned through their reſtleſs endeavours to compaſs the iniquitous projects they had formed.

Thoſe, on the other hand, who were branded with the appellation of tories, retorted all theſe reproaches with the utmoſt acrimony of language and argument. The whigs, ſaid they, were the genuine deſcendants and repreſentatives of thoſe republican incendiaries, who had in the laſt century overturned the conſtitution, and deſolated the kingdom. Under pretence of aſſerting the liberty of the ſubject, they meant no more than to engroſs all authority to themſelves, and to ouſt every man who differed from them in opinion: an impartial examination of their conduct in the unhappy times alluded to, would prove this beyond the power of refutation.

The zeal diſplayed by the whigs for government, had never been real and patriotic; it was purely in ſupport of their own people and meaſures. They oppoſed all thoſe who diſapproved of their principles, whatever merit they could plead, or whatever abilities they poſſeſſed. Sooner than miſs of their aims, they would involve the realm in confuſion.

They boasted of the revolution, and of the settlement of the crown upon the Princes of the House of Hanover; but both these were the joint deeds of the whole nation. While their faction was uppermost, they were as tyrannical in maintaining themselves in the seat of authority, as those whom they taxed with being the favourers of absolute monarchy. Who were the framers of the riot act? Who were the establishers of septennial parliaments but the whigs alone, in opposition to the repeated remonstrances and clamours of the tories? Were these, in the veriest height of their power, ever guilty of such glaring encroachments as the last, upon the freedom of this country?

The tories, as their enemies affected to call them, were the true and substantial friends to English freedom, which consisted in preserving the constitution duly poised; in partitioning power between king and people, and leaving to each his own share. But the whigs coveted the whole power of the state, and would trust the crown with hardly any more than the appearance and trappings of royalty: they assigned to it, in short, the mere shadow, and reserved the substance for themselves. What was this but substituting an aristocracy in place of a monarchy? Could this be called maintaining the constitution? Was it not, in fact, laying the axe to its very root? Was it not centering the sovereignty in the hands of a faction? For what is aristocracy but the combination of a particular set of individuals, who have agreed to support each other in governing exclusively the residue of the community?

In the present dispute, the great and principal object of decision was, whether King and Parliament united were to be obeyed or resisted: the tories declared for obedience, the whigs for resistance. This was the true state of the question, and not whether

whether the tories or the whigs were the ſincereſt friends to the public.

Had the Crown, in the preſent unhappy conteſt, acted independently of Parliament, or in contradiction to its advice or conſent, then indeed the whigs would have had reaſon to complain; but nothing of this kind was alledged. The King and the Parliament acted with an unanimity, that afforded not the ſlighteſt pretence for clamouring againſt any invaſion of popular rights. If the whigs were diſpleaſed at the perfect concord of ſentiments that ſubſiſted between the ſovereign and the majority of his people, as repreſented in Parliament, they were at full liberty to ſhow, by dint of argument and reaſoning, if ſuch a thing were practicable, that the king and the nation were both miſtaken in their politics, and that themſelves only apprehended things rightly. The field was open to them for ſuch a diſcuſſion; they had indeed often entered the liſts; but had not hitherto been able to convict their opponents of miſmanagement, any more than to gain them over to their way of thinking.

The truth was, therefore, that two parties ſubſiſted in the nation; the one was of opinion that the Colonies owed obedience to Great Britain in all caſes whatſoever; and in caſe of refuſal, ought to be compelled to pay it: the other, though it acknowledged the ſame obligation in the Colonies, thought it was unadviſable to enforce it. In a queſtion of ſuch importance, the only conſtitutional method of deciding, was by an appeal to Parliament. That appeal had been made; and Parliament had determined for compulſion. Such a deciſion ought to be conſidered as the voice of the nation. Were a parliamentary majority to be viewed in any other light, all things would fall into confuſion, and no rule of government would remain.

Yet it was this very plurality of votes which

the oppoſition ſtrove with all its might to repreſent as undeſerving of obedience; for ſuch was the evident and unqueſtionable aim of all their arguments and repreſentations. Their partiſans had the audacity to ſtile thoſe men tories, who maintained the juſtneſs of complying with the will of the legiſlature. But if ſuch were the maxims of the whigs, let impartial men pronounce the ſentence between them and the tories, and laying their hands upon their hearts, conſcientiouſly decide, which of the two were the ſtricteſt obſervers of the laws of their country.

As it was ſcandalous, therefore, to ſtigmatize men for differing in ſentiments, it was ſtill more iniquitous to defame them for complying with the regulations preſcribed by the wiſdom of the community, for the maintenance of good order. The very eſſence of liberty conſiſted in ſubmiſſion to no authority that was not enforced by a ſuperiority of ſuffrages. To endeavour at an invalidation of ſuch authority, whether by open or indirect means, was conſequently an attack upon the conſtitution, little differing from treaſon, as it tended manifeſtly to a breach of the public peace, and to render people refractory and ſeditious.

Theſe heavy retortions did not paſs unanſwered. As they fell upon a numerous body, a multitude of champions ſtarted up in defence of the principles of the Whig party. Theſe principles, it was ſaid, were either miſunderſtood, or miſrepreſented by the Tories. The true Whigs were more intent on the ſubſtantial preſervation of liberty, than on the formal mode of doing it. They little valued what name was given to that body of men by whom public freedom was upheld, whether Parliament or People. If a Parliament was to become ſo corrupt as to betray its conſtituents, it was the height of abſurdity to contend, that theſe

were

were bound to ſubmit to their betrayers. The people alone were the beſt judges whether Parliament acted in conformity to their wiſhes. Whenever they were diſpleaſed with their proceedings, they had the cleareſt right to call them to an account. This was the ſole foundation of all liberty. What were the motives that were ſuppoſed to influence the electors, but the expectations that thoſe whom they choſe to repreſent them were in the ſame ſentiments as themſelves reſpecting public matters? Whatever the members elected might pretend, when once they had ſecured their ſeats, nothing was clearer than that they not only virtually, but formally acknowledged theſe to be the true principles of the conſtitution. If any one doubted of this, let him attend to the numerous advertiſements that crouded the public prints on the eve of an election. However men might be Tories in their hearts, they were obliged on theſe occaſions to be Whigs in appearance, otherwiſe they ſtood little chance, though backed with all the power of money, and all the influence of miniſtry, to be choſen even in ſome of the moſt corrupt and venal boroughs.

Parliament was a ſacred and venerable appellation. It was through Parliament that liberty was eſtabliſhed in England: but it ought alſo to be remembered, that a great authority had told this country, that if it was ever undone, it would be through a Parliament. After ſo ſolemn and ſerious a warning, it behoved the nation to watch the motions of that body with no leſs vigilance than had been exerciſed by that body itſelf, while it harboured ſuſpicions of the Crown. This was particularly neceſſary, when its harmony with the Crown and miniſtry was unacceptable to a large proportion of the ſubjects. This was a circumſtance that always accompanied thoſe meaſures that were rather of a dangerous tendency. Whenever they were clearly advan-

tageous to the community, no murmuring was heard; or if it ſhould happen that diſcontented individuals diſſented from them, their reaſonings made little impreſſion upon the public.

But in the preſent caſe, a very conſiderable part of the Britiſh empire totally diſapproved of the meaſures adopted by the miniſtry. Even in Britain itſelf, it was doubtful whether the majority did really coincide with theſe meaſures. It was evident they were odious in the higheſt degree to thoſe whom they affected; that alone ſhould have ſuſpended their execution, had moderation preſided in our councils. It was this temperate and cool behaviour, this reſpect for the opinions of the community, that characteriſed the Whigs. They did not enſlave themſelves to the letter of the law, nor to the ſtrictneſs of rights. They looked upon the judgment of the great body of the people to be more worthy of regard than any formal act of the legiſlature. As government was made for the conveniency and welfare of men, if it did not anſwer this end, men were juſtified in oppoſing it, and inſiſting upon a rectification of thoſe errors and abuſes from which no human inſtitution is entirely free.

Were a juſt computation to be made of thoſe numbers in Great Britain and Ireland, that favoured the Colonies, it could hardly admit of a doubt, that, added to the inhabitants of the Colonies, they would form an incomparable majority. This was the ground on which the Whigs took their ſtand. It was a fair and honeſt method of ſettling the great buſineſs now agitated. It was accompanied with no intricacy; it met fully the aſſertion of the Tories, that freedom ſtood ſafeſt on the baſis of ſuffrages: on the ſuperiority of theſe let therefore the deciſion reſt.

Parliament indeed would not be pleaſed to allow any other denomination of men to interfere

in matters of ſuch conſequence. But here again the Tories appeared in their true light, in aſcribing excluſive and indiviſible power to that body of men. It was preciſely in this point they differed chiefly from the Whigs. Theſe acknowledged the Parliament to be no more than a deputation from the people, to conſult about, and manage their affairs with more convenience than it was poſſible for them to do. An idea of this kind deſtroyed at once thoſe claims of omnipotence, ſo ſtrongly and unwarrantably beſtowed upon that aſſembly. According to this idea, the members that compoſed it were the deputies, and not the abſolute rulers of the people; they had no rights but in common with their conſtituents, ſuch formalities excepted, as were neceſſary for the due tranſaction of the buſineſs with which they were intruſted.

Such, it was ſaid, was the doctrine taught by the Whigs. It was indeed totally repugnant to that inculcated by the Tories. Theſe, by their practice, ſeemed to be of opinion, that a Parliamentary election conferred on individuals rights almoſt ſimilar to thoſe which the partizans of paſſive obedience had aſcribed to Kings. They participated abſolute power in conjunction with the Crown, and were not to be reſiſted nor controuled upon any account. But who did not ſee, that if ſuch a tenet was admitted, ſlavery might be as completely eſtabliſhed as under an arbitrary monarch? A conformity of opinion in a ſufficient number to conſtitute a majority, was experimentally found to be not difficult to purchaſe. It was not therefore ſuch a majority that common ſenſe would ever allow to be the fair and unbiaſſed interpreter of the genuine mind of a nation.

For the ſake of public tranquility, it was undoubtedly adviſable to refrain from violence in oppoſing the undue meaſures countenanced by the majority, unleſs indeed they were pregnant with inſtant

inſtant and intolerable miſchiefs; but it did not follow from thence, that individuals were not at liberty to reprobate them with the utmoſt explicitneſs and indignation, whenever they appeared contrary to the intereſt of the community.

Such, it was ſaid, in contradiction to what had been aſſerted by the Tories, was the real character of the Whigs. The former now complained that obedience was refuſed to the legiſlature of Great Britain by its own ſubjects. The latter, upon matureſt reflection, denied that in the preſent inſtance the right of legiſlating was veſted in thoſe who aſſumed it; and that were it otherwiſe, the enforcement of ſuch a right would be attended with ſo many evils, that no prudent men, much leſs any true friends to liberty, would inſiſt upon it.

The general reply to the ſupporters of whig principles was, that theſe were not admiſſible in ſound policy. They were plauſible in theory, but deſtructive in practice. Authority, ſovereign and uncontrouled, muſt neceſſarily reſide ſomewhere; and allowing every inſinuation of bribery and corruption to be true, it were ſtill better to be governed, in ſome inſtances, through their influence, than to have no government at all. This muſt, in fact, prove the caſe, were continual appeals to be made to the people, the unavoidable conſequence of which would be perpetual broils at home, neceſſarily followed by diſaſters and misfortunes abroad.

In the midſt of the ferment occaſioned by this claſhing of parties, thoſe claſſes whoſe repreſentations have naturally the moſt weight in a commercial country, were full of alarm and terror. It had been expreſſed as a well-founded hope, during the laſt ſeſſion of Parliament, that the bill for depriving the people of New England of the benefits of the fiſhery at Newfoundland, would prove highly intereſting to Great

Britain, by throwing into her hands alone the profits that were heretofore divided between her and the Colonies. But this expectation was disappointed in the most signal manner. The number of ships fitted out for that fishery was little more considerable than usual. When they arrived on the Banks of Newfoundland, they found themselves arrested in their operations by the prohibition to supply them with any necessaries, which was made by the Congress, in retaliation of the act to prevent the Colonies from fishing. This threw them into such a state of confusion and distress as they had never before experienced: not only the shipping, but those who were settled on the shores of Newfoundland, were in immediate danger of perishing by famine. Instead of prosecuting the business they came upon, many of the ships were constrained to make the best of their way to every place where provisions could be procured. From these, and other causes that have been already mentioned, the profits of this fishery, far from increasing this season, had suffered, according to a computation made at that time, a diminution of near five hundred thousand pounds.

In addition to the obstructions thrown by the Americans in the way of this trade, some natural causes co-operated, which by the more serious among those who favoured the Americans, were looked upon as a sort of interposition from above, and a punishment upon those who had sentenced them to a deprivation of that sustenance which Providence seemed to have marked out as their peculiar property. A storm uncommonly terrible visited these latitudes during the fishing season. It was attended with circumstances unusally dreadful and destructive. The sea rose, according to report, full thirty feet above its ordinary level; this happened so suddenly, that no time was given to prepare against

periſhed, together with the people in them; and ſome ſhips foundered with their whole crews. The devaſtation was hardly leſs on ſhore; the waters broke in upon the land beyond all their uſual bounds, and occaſioned vaſt loſs and deſtruction.

Theſe various accidents made a powerful impreſſion upon the minds of the multitude. It ſeemed as if fortune had determined to frown upon Britain in every quarter. When people laid together the events that had happened within the ſhort period of a twelvemonth, and compared them with the views and intentions of thoſe againſt whom they militated in ſo apparent and ſtriking a manner, numbers hardly knew to what cauſe they ſhould attribute ſo many diſaſters, whether to the iniquity, or to the imprudence of the ſchemes in agitation.

Petitions were now renewed with as much fervour and earneſtneſs as ever againſt the further proſecution of hoſtilities. The cities of London and Briſtol were, as uſual, foremoſt in this line. They repreſented the inutility of all the attempts that had hitherto been made to reduce the Colonies to a compliance with the terms ſo often propoſed. Reſtriction and coercion had equally failed; and the Colonies had now exerted themſelves in ſuch a manner, and had made ſuch preparations for their defence, that were it practicable to overcome them, the danger and the expence of ſuch an undertaking were far beyond any poſſible benefit that could attend it. Rivers of blood muſt be ſhed, and debts incurred that would inevitably bring the nation to a ſtate of debility, from which it would be many years in recovering. Meanwhile foreign ſtates would not loſe ſight of our diſtractions; they would improve thoſe opportunities of thriving which we were throwing into their hands; they would lie in wait to ſeize upon thoſe branches which we ſhould be neceſſarily obliged to neglect, and which, when

once fallen into their poſſeſſion, it would be very difficult, if poſſible to regain.

Were the Americans to continue their reſiſtance as they had begun, the ſubduing of them would be the work of years. They ſeemed obſtinately bent never to yield but to actual force; in which caſe, if we meant to carry our point, we muſt match their obſtinacy, and doom them to utter deſtruction.—But what would reſult from ſo dreadful a reſolution, were we to execute it, but their ruin, added to our own? What would it avail Britain to poſſeſs a deſolated country, of which the inhabitants would be unable to repay it for thoſe requiſites that would be wanted to reſtore it to any tolerable condition? The more the conſequences of this fatal diſpute were conſidered, the leſs it deſerved proſecution: it were even more conſiſtent with the intereſt of Britain to abandon America, than to retain it at ſuch a rate.

As the employment of foreign troops to reduce the Colonies was now a meaſure publicly mentioned, the petitioners did not fail to animadvert upon it in the moſt poignant and ſevere terms. The European nations would now, ſaid they, load this nation with taunts and reproaches, and repreſent it as ſo immerſed in effeminacy, as to want courage and vigour to repreſs its revolted dependencies. Nothing, it would be ſaid, was left us but money and pride. Degeneracy and tyranny would be the colours with which our many open and ſecret enemies would draw our character; nor indeed would ground be wanting for ſuch an accuſation.

Such was the purport of the petitions, and ſtill more of the diſcourſes held on this irkſome ſubject. As it became daily more important, from the uncertainty how it would terminate, and the apprehenſion that its termination would rather be fatal to this country, people began to feel an intereſt in the

ther than complaints and menaces, they did not ſeem duly ſuſceptible.

An argument, of which the advocates of the Americans made powerful uſe at this time, to enforce the ſincerity of their diſpoſition to be reconciled, was the large remittances that have been mentioned, made to this country in various articles, for the payment of their debts, and their abundant importations of corn, when our exportations to them were at an end. Theſe were alledged as ſtrong motives to treat them with lenity, and to have recourſe to friendly negotiations, rather than to force.

The conſiderations recommended in the multiplicity of remonſtrances and petitions that were now making, received no ſmall aſſiſtance from the retroſpection of the inefficacy of the meaſures purſued in America, and the unabated conſtancy with which the oppoſition, both in and out of Parliament, ſtood out againſt the deſigns of the miniſtry. The backwardneſs that was no leſs viſible among the commonalty to engage in a war againſt their fellow-ſubjects, was alſo a material diſcouragement; as, though individually unimportant, yet the clamours of a diſcontented multitude could not paſs altogether unregarded.

People indeed were highly diſpleaſed at the repulſe of the Britiſh military, and the ill ſucceſs that had attended their operations; but this diſpoſition was chiefly found among thoſe, who from their education, harboured a ſenſe of national honour.—It did not pervade the generality with ſufficient animation and energy for the purpoſes that were now propoſed.

In the mean time, as a very conſiderable ſtrength would be needed to carry thoſe extenſive plans into execution which the miniſtry had formed, and was inflexibly determined upon, it was now deemed expedient to borrow the aſſiſtance of foreign arms for the re-

duction of America. Difficulties of ſeveral kinds ſeemed to threaten a defeat to this ſcheme, but it was not doubted that means would be found to ſurmount them: the treaſures of Great Britain were an allurement that few Princes in Europe could withſtand.

On the ſtrength of this powerful motive, the Britiſh miniſtry applied to ſeveral of the petty courts of Germany, a country famous for producing hardy men, and good ſoldiers, and of which the many ſovereigns were not diſinclined to hire out their ſubjects for pecuniary emoluments.

In the preſent caſe, however, the proſpect of the diſtance and danger, were no ſmall obſtacles in the way of obtaining their conſent. An immenſe tract of ſea was to be croſſed; this alone offered a multitude of perils to encounter. When arrived at the place of their deſtination, it became an object of ſerious conſideration, whether the ſame motives that had of late years occaſioned ſo many emigrations from Germany to this part of the world, would not operate on the minds of the troops now ſent thither ſo effectually, as to induce great numbers of them to deſert to the Americans. This would prove a double detriment, by weakening the force intended to ſubdue them, and adding it to their own.—Another pernicious conſequence would follow in the total and irretrievable loſs of ſo many ſubjects: this latter was an object leaſt of any to be overlooked by Princes who made a traffic of letting them out.

Beſides theſe reflections, which naturally occurred to theſe Princes, their very ſubjects, however obſequious and paſſive, were ſtartled at the propoſal of being tranſported acroſs the ocean into another world, there to be expoſed to all the miſeries of war, with very precarious hopes of ever returning to their country.

Excluſive

Excluſive of theſe German auxiliaries, others were alſo mentioned. The Ruſſian troops, now deſervedly celebrated for their late victories over the Turks, were included in the idea of thoſe foreigners who were to be employed upon the American continent. The aſſiſtance which that nation had derived from the naval ſkill and bravery of numbers of Britiſh officers and ſailors, was looked upon as a juſt motive to expect the concurrence of that Court in the ſchemes on foot in that of Great Britain.

Holland itſelf was recurred to on this occaſion. As its pacific diſpoſition for many years rendered the foreign troops in its ſervice of no abſolute uſe; application was made for that body of Scotch troops which has been of ſo long ſtanding in that country. But two powerful cauſes militated againſt this application. The politics of Great Britain reſpecting America, were conſidered in Holland as erroneous in the higheſt degree. They would compel the Colonies to throw themſelves into the arms of France, and to add thereby to the ſtrength of a power, already too formidable for England and Holland not to be alarmed at its further increaſe: the leſs encouragement, therefore, the Britiſh miniſtry met with in the proſecution of its imprudent ſchemes, the ſooner it would be obliged to drop them.

The other cauſe was not leſs weighty. America was repreſented as preciſely in the ſame ſituation the United Provinces were in two centuries before, at the period of their formation into a Republic. The Americans were ſtruggling for that liberty, which the Dutch had contended for much in the ſame manner. The ſimilitude in a variety of inſtances was ſtriking and impreſſive. It would therefore be highly improper in a ſtate that had ſet the Americans ſo conſpicuous an example of reſiſtance, to be aiding in puniſhing them for having followed its example.

This argument was peculiarly inſiſted upon, and placed in the ſtrongeſt light poſſible by ſome members of the States General, whoſe enmity to England has ſince declared itſelf in a more open and explicit manner. They began even then to entertain hopes of availing themſelves, in due time, of theſe diſſentions, to mature that project of overturning the Britiſh intereſt in Holland, which the French faction had ſo long been aiming to compaſs, and now thought an opportunity would ere long be afforded of deſtroying for ever.

Holland and France were indeed the two countries that eſpouſed, with more warmth than any other, the cauſe of America. Pamphlets were continually publiſhing at Amſterdam in juſtification of the Colonies: their caſe was circumſtantially compared with that of the Netherlands in former days; and they were warmly exhorted to perſevere in defence of their claims, againſt the pretenſions of the Britiſh nation.

Great Britain, too, was repreſented as inſatiably covetous of wealth and power, and as graſping at all that lay within a poſſibility of ſeizing. She was taxed with a domineering diſpoſition, that had, ſince her ſucceſſes in the late war, become intolerable to all her neighbours, and, in truth, to the whole world. She had even, in the courſe of that very war, exerciſed an abſolute ſovereignty at ſea, and did not ſcruple to avow a right and title to rule over that element.

It was the common intereſt of all Europe to put an end to theſe imperious pretenſions. An opportunity now offered, ſuch as might never again be given: it was favourable in the higheſt degree, as it aroſe from internal diſſentions, which would weaken that ambitious power ſo effectually, that there was no reaſon to doubt ſhe would, through

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them, become utterly unable to maintain her unjuſt claims any longer.

Her Colonies therefore ought to be vigorouſly ſupported, and induced, not only to refuſe ſubmiſſion to her demands, but even to caſt off her authority, and aſſume the rank of independent ſtates. Unleſs this were thoroughly accompliſhed, it was in vain to look forwards with any certainty of being ſecure from her naval deſpotiſm. Were a reconciliation to take place between Great Britain and her Colonies, they would, for their mutual intereſt, agrëe to a final and deciſive ſettlement of their reſpective rights; this would at once preclude all poſſibility of future diſputes, in which caſe the union that would be formed between them, would become indiſſoluble; and, what Europe ought moſt ſeriouſly to conſider, would become formidable in the moſt alarming degree, and able alone to balance the whole maritime ſtrength of the univerſe.

Such were the remonſtrances of the political individuals in France and Holland. As there was undoubtedly truth in them, they made a due impreſſion, and were attended to by many a potentate. They contributed gradually to ſtrengthen that inimical diſpoſition to Britain, which had already begun to take root, and the effects of which appeared not long after to the great detriment of this country.

In the mean while, the old allies of Britain, confiding in that honour and liberality which they had experienced from her in the war they had lately waged under her banners, thought proper to accede to her demands. Theſe were the Princes of the Houſes of Heſſe, and of Brunſwick, who, with ſome other German Princes of inferior note, furniſhed her with a conſiderable number of troops.

In order, at the ſame time, that as many Britiſh forces as poſſible might be employed in the buſineſs propoſed, large drafts were made from the garriſons

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of Gibraltar and Minorca, which were replaced by an equal proportion of men out of the military eſtabliſhment in the Electorate of Hanover.

The expences incurred in the proſecution of this war, began to occaſion univerſal alarm. It had been expected that a Britiſh army would have remained in ſufficient poſſeſſion of the field, to have commanded the ſupplies of freſh proviſions neceſſary for the demands of the military. But it could neither keep the field, nor procure them at any rate. In ſo calamitous a ſituation, it behoved thoſe under whoſe auſpices they acted, that ſo many brave men ſhould not periſh for want.

To do the miniſtry juſtice, it exerted itſelf on this occaſion, in a manner that will never be forgotten; and that deſervedly recommended it to the attachment of thoſe in favour of whom theſe exertions were made. The enumeration of what was ſhipped for the troops at Boſton, amounted to five thouſand live oxen, and fourteen thouſand ſheep, with a proportionable number of hogs, all ſorts of vegetables in prodigious quantities, and prepared with infinite care in order to preſerve them, ten thouſand butts of ſtrong beer, and five thouſand chaldron of coals.

The purchaſe and ſhipping of theſe and various other neceſſaries, amounted to an immenſe ſum. The very articles of oats, hay, and beans, for a regiment of light horſe in Boſton, was computed at twenty thouſand pounds. Thoſe of vinegar, vegetables, and caſks, at no leſs. All the reſt was in proportion. Beſides theſe heavy charges, the contingencies occaſioned by military operations aroſe to near five hundred thouſand pounds. Such amazing diſburſements to ſupply a force that was far from conſiderable, and whoſe ſphere of action was circumſcribed to the meer duties of a garriſon, aſtoniſhed all people, and made them very anxious for

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the iſſue of a conteſt, the commencements of which were ſo burthenſome.

In conſequence of theſe prodigious expences, the price of all things was proportionably raiſed. That of ſhipping particularly roſe one fourth in the ton. The profits made by contractors and their numerous connexions were much complained of; but the multitudes who benefited, on the other hand, in the infinite variety of branches through which the public ſervice was carried on, ſeemed in ſome meaſure to atone for, and countenance this profuſion of treaſure.

But theſe uncommon exertions were, by the general fatality of the times, doomed to be of ſmall ſervice. What from inattention, or inexpertneſs, want of due care, and delays, it was ſo late in the year before the tranſports were in readineſs for ſailing, that their voyages were loſt. They remained long wind-bound, and after leaving port, they met with ſuch ſtormy weather, that inſtead of being able to proceed, they were toſſed to and fro in the Channel, and loſt moſt of the live ſtock they had on board, before they could clear the coaſt of England. Nor even then did they meet with more favourable circumſtances. Their progreſs was retarded by a continuance of bad weather: when arrived on the coaſt of America, the winds, periodical in thoſe latitudes, drove them again to ſea. Some were forced away as far as the Weſt Indies; others, after beating along the ſhore, were captured by the American privateers, who were uncommonly active as ſoon as they received intelligence of their having ſailed from the Engliſh harbours. An inconſiderable number reached Boſton at laſt, after plying near four months on the ſeas. But the proviſions they brought were damaged; and out of the prodigious quantity that had been collected in England,

land, but a wretched remnant was landed in America.

Awakened by the ſufferings of the garriſon at Boſton, a ſubſcription was ſet on foot towards the cloſe of the year, for the relief of the ſoldiers, and the families of thoſe that had died in the ſervice. The ſubſcription was liberal upon the whole; but numbers refuſed to contribute, from their diſapprobation of the meaſures which it was calculated to encourage, and in which they would have thought themſelves guilty of participating, by countenancing thoſe who were employed to execute them. Some diſapproved of it, as an ignominious manner of ſupporting the military profeſſion, which ought never to become an object of compaſſion. No few moſt bitterly complained that an injudicious application had been made of the money that had been appropriated for the American ſervice; and that with due œconomy it would have abundantly ſufficed for all the wants and demands of the forces there.

The ſeaſon for the meeting of Parliament was now approaching; and it was univerſally expected that party diviſions would become more violent than ever. Rumours of combinations in favour of the Americans were frequent, and that they were privately abetted by the advice and correſpondence, and aſſiſted by the purſes of perſonages of high rank and importance. Theſe reports ſpread much alarm throughout the nation, and greatly exaſperated thoſe who looked upon the Americans as rebels. They could not hear, without the utmoſt wrath and indignation, that any man in this country ſhould dare to ſupport them in ſo treaſonable a manner.

It has often been made a matter of diſcuſſion, whence theſe ſurmiſes firſt aroſe, as no diſcovery of ſuch practices was ever made, notwithſtanding the many hints and ſuſpicions that were given and taken

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at this buſy period. It is moſt probable that they originated in the vain conjectures of idle and uninformed people, and were propagated by the weak and credulous, who ſeldom fail to exaggerate matters of this kind, till at laſt they gain ground, and, by imperceptible additions, become objects of public attention.

The opening of the ſeſſion was marked by an extraordinary inſtance of this nature. Mr. Sayre, a gentleman born in America, and at this time a banker in London, was committed to the Tower on a charge of high treaſon. It was at firſt generally imagined, that remittances of money had paſſed through his hands from the diſaffected in England to their friends in America. But the particulars of the charge were of quite another ſort. He was accuſed of as bold and daring a conſpiracy as ever was framed in this country. His deſign, it was ſaid, was to ſeize the King, as he went in ſtate to Parliament, to carry him to the Tower, and thence to convey him out of the kingdom, and in the mean time to alter the form of government.

In order to effect all this, a ſum of money was to be diſtributed among ſome of the ſerjeants of the Guards, who with part of it were to bribe thoſe men in whom they could confide for ſuch a purpoſe. While one party ſecured the King's perſon, another was to have ſeized upon the Tower for his reception. No other preparations were mentioned for executing the further intentions propoſed reſpecting either King or government.

It was alledged, in vindication of Mr. Sayre's commitment on this ſtrange accuſation, that the charge was clear and poſitive; and that however, abſurd, ſtill ſuch an attempt might be made. The information being given to a ſecretary of ſtate in his official capacity, he could not conſiſtently with his duty, forbear to proceed upon it according to the

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uſual forms, however he might think it improbable or falſe: the royal perſon was ſo ſacred, that it ſhould be guarded from the remoteſt poſſibility of danger.

The conduct of the ſecretary of ſtate was allowed to be juſtifiable in point of law, but there were many who queſtioned the propriety of it, in regard to prudence and good policy. It was ſaid, that the impriſonment, and poſſible ruin of an individual, ought not to have preceded a cloſe and candid inveſtigation of a charge attended with ſuch glaring and palpable improbability.

The news of this tranſaction alarmed the whole kingdom more than any event that had yet happened ſince the King's acceſſion to the throne. Numbers began to be perſuaded, that the plots and machinations ſo much inſiſted upon of late, were well founded, and that this was a prelude to many others.

The confinement of Mr. Sayre was very ſtrict and ſevere. No perſon had acceſs to him but his wife, and this indulgence was not obtained without difficulty. He did not however remain long in this ſituation; at the expiration of five days, he was brought by an habeas before the Lord Chief Juſtice of the King's Bench, who, upon inquiring into the matter, admitted him to bail, upon a trifling ſecurity for his appearance to anſwer to the charge. But as no proſecution enſued, and the bail was diſcharged, of courſe, he then ſued the ſecretary of ſtate for unlawful impriſonment, and was by a jury adjudged a thouſand pounds damages.

The ſeſſion of Parliament was opened in the mean time with a ſpeech from the throne, complaining of the miſrepreſentations that had been uſed in America to ſeduce the people into a ſyſtem of opinions repugnant to the true conſtitution of the Colonies, and to their ſubordinate relation to Great Britain.

Britain. They had now proceeded ſo far as to avow an open reſiſtance, and to ſeize the whole powers of government into their own hands. While they endeavoured to delude with ſpecious profeſſions of loyalty, they had in fact no other view than to eſtabliſh an independent empire in America. But it was to be hoped the ſpirit of the Britiſh nation was too high, and its reſources too numerous, tamely to acquieſce in the loſs of what had been acquired with ſo much toil, nurſed with ſuch care, and protected at ſo great an expence of blood and treaſure. A full exertion of theſe reſources was now required. In the mean time, as clemency would be preferred to puniſhment, in order to prevent the inconveniencies which might ariſe from the great diſtance of the Colonies, and to remove as ſoon as poſſible, the calamities which they ſuffered, authority would be given to certain perſons upon the ſpot, to grant general or particular pardons and indemnities, in ſuch manner, and to ſuch perſons as they ſhould think fit; to receive the ſubmiſſion of any Province or Colony which ſhould be diſpoſed to return to its allegiance, and to reſtore it to the free exerciſe of its commerce, and to the ſame protection and ſecurity as if it had never revolted.

The addreſs that was propoſed by the miniſterial party in anſwer to this ſpeech, adopted its intent in every point: but it met with a ſevere oppoſition, which did not however prevent its being carried, like thoſe in the preceding ſeſſions.

A nobleman of great rank and influence in the minority, moved, that inſtead of concurring in ſuch an addreſs, a declaration ſhould be preſented, the purport of which ſhould be, that the Houſe beheld with the utmoſt concern the diſorders and diſcontents in the Colonies rather increaſed, than diminiſhed, by the means that had been uſed to ſuppreſs and allay them; a circumſtance alone ſufficient to

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give reaſon to fear, that thoſe means were not originally well conſidered, or properly adapted to their ends: that they were ſatisfied by experience, that the misfortune had in a great meaſure ariſen from the want of full and perfect information of the true ſtate and condition of the Colonies by reaſon of which, meaſures injurious and inefficacious had been carried into execution, tending to tarniſh the luſtre of the Britiſh arms, to bring diſcredit on his Majeſty's councils, and to nouriſh, without hope of end, a moſt unhappy civil war.

That deeply impreſſed with the melancholy ſtate of public concerns, they would, in the fulleſt information they could obtain, and with the matureſt deliberation they could employ, review the whole of the late proceedings, that they might be enabled to diſcover, as they would be moſt willing to apply, the moſt effectual means of reſtoring order to the diſtracted affairs of the Britiſh empire, confidence to his Majeſty's government, obedience, by a prudent and temperate uſe of its powers, to the authority of Parliament, and ſatisfaction and happineſs to all his people; that by theſe means they truſt to avoid any occaſion of having recourſe to the alarming and dangerous expedient of calling in foreign forces to the ſupport of his Majeſty's authority within his own dominions, and the ſtill more dreadful calamity of ſhedding Britiſh blood by Britiſh arms.

Long and ſerious debates were occaſioned by this motion, accompanied with the utmoſt ſtrength and vehemence of language. The ſpeech was examined with great freedom and ſeverity by the members in oppoſition. Miniſtry was accuſed of having placed the monarch of Great Britain in a more difficult and diſhonourable ſituation than any Prince in Europe.

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He was no longer the ſovereign of America; he had loſt half his dominions, and the other half was filled with diſcontent and diſſention. Corruption and venality were the inſtruments by which the kingdom was ruled; otherwiſe it could not have been brought to ſo deplorable a condition. From the moſt flouriſhing ſtate in the univerſe, it was now become one of the moſt unfortunate. All public virtue was loſt; no ſentiments were cheriſhed but thoſe of the meaneſt ſelfiſhneſs; every poſſible encouragement was held out to ſacrifice the intereſt of the realm to the views of ſuch as were unable and unworthy of governing it: theſe had by their deſtructive maxims, involved the nation in a moſt pernicious conteſt, that would, if purſued, prove the infallible ruin of the Britiſh empire. It was founded upon haughtineſs, tyranny, and imprudence; all three concurred ſo manifeſtly in ſupporting it, that no man, unleſs deſtitute of all feelings of juſtice, enſlaved by the moſt venal profligacy, or totally void of underſtanding, could have been prevailed upon to give it any countenance.—So ſudden and inſtantaneous a deſtruction of a great and mighty power, could not be paralleled in hiſtory. The very outſet of this fatal quarrel had already ſevered a greater extent of teritory from Britain, than had by the moſt rapid conqueſt ever yet known, been loſt in ſo ſhort a time, and unexpected a manner.

The charge of aiming at independence, ſo continually imputed to the Colonies had no real foundation. It was a ſuppoſition which indeed our conduct might induce them to realize; but they had hitherto firmly denied it, by every aſſervation which is held ſolemn and binding in ſociety, and had equally refuted it by their deeds. Whoever underſtood the intereſt, and was acquainted with the temper and inclination of the Americans, knew that

they harboured no ſuch wiſhes. But if we perſiſted in the execution of plans ſo odious to them, it could not be expected, that men ſo naturally impatient of oppreſſion, would not prefer independence to a connection that brought ſlavery upon them. If England meant to retain them, it muſt allow them the rights of Engliſhmen, otherwiſe they would ſecure the continuance of them by a total ſeparation from this country: a meaſure which no man in his right mind could blame them for, as herein they would act according to the dictates of ſtrict juſtice, and in perfect conformity to the maxims of that conſtitution, which they and their forefathers had ſo long been taught to conſider as the beſt and wiſeſt that ever was framed for the government of mankind.

They were accuſed of profeſſing attachment and loyalty with no other intention than to deceive, and gain time for the more ſecure accompliſhment of their deſigns againſt this country: but this imputation was eaſily anſwered by the conſtant tenour of all their propoſals and repreſentations. Inſtead of leading the Britiſh miniſtry into wrong notions of their intentions, they had, without the leaſt reſerve or equivocation, told them in the plaineſt language that words could form, that they would by no means ſubmit to the terms held out to them; this they had invariably done from the commencement of this unhappy altercation: they had, in ſhort, acted the part of men; they had ſpoken their minds, and kept their words; they had threatened reſiſtance if we proceeded to force. Having embraced this as our laſt reſource, they had of courſe employed the other. Of what therefore could we complain, but of not believing them in time, of thinking meanly and injurioufly of them, and in that perſuaſion of having adopted a ſyſtem which experi-

Miniſtry could not pretend they had been impoſed upon by ſpecious repreſentations in any ſtage of the buſineſs. The truth was, they fully underſtood the Americans, but they undervalued their character, and deſpiſed their menaces: they promiſed themſelves an eaſy victory over ſuch men as their ideas depicted them; the methods of compulſion were proportioned to thoſe ideas; and now that they were found inadequate, an exculpation was ſought, by throwing the blame of deception and falſehood upon people, who, inſtead of deceiving and miſleading them, had on the contrary, convinced them that they themſelves were guilty of the groſſeſt ignorance and infatuation, in perſiſting to think and hope that the conqueſt of America was not an enterprize of the greateſt difficulty, and would not involve the whole Britiſh empire in one common ruin.

But what could be expected of a miniſtry that was wilfully guilty of an accumulation of errors? The very firſt ſteps they took were unſucceſsful; they equally miſcarried in the ſecond, and in the many others which pride and ignorance had dictated; yet no repulſe could overthrow their obſtinacy. The conſequences of their imprudence were ſo obvious, that they required no ſagacity to be foreſeen; they had been circumſtantially predicted, and unhappily for Britain, events had verified the prediction.

Seſſions had followed each other in theſe conſtant forewarnings on the one hand, and in the moſt illiberal inſinuations on the other. Whoever oppoſed the miniſtry, was repreſented as an enemy to his country,—an abettor of rebellion; and yet in what did this oppoſition conſiſt? In the moſt fervent intreaties to ponder well on the meaſures they were framing, to avoid any that might irritate and drive the Americans to deſperation; to beware of any

that would lead to effusion of blood, and profusion of treasure.

The advice and caution recommended by the opposition, were reprobated as the remonstrance of factious men, disappointed in their aims at power, and who thought themselves alone entitled to direct. The knowledge and information at which they pretended, was described as founded on their own conjectures and presumption, and void of reality.

But whence was it that ministry received that intelligence on which they erected the fatal system that now alarmed all parties? From individuals appointed by themselves to superintend the affairs of a people, to whom they were particularly odious; who had long suspected them of secret enmity; who had more than once petitioned for their removal; and who seemed resolved never to acquiesce under the authority of such delegates.

Had men of true wisdom been at the head of administration, would they have continued such individuals in the seats of government over a people by whom they were held in such odium? Would they not have prudently yielded to the discontents of a respectable public, and endeavoured to stifle them by condescension? But instead of recalling these instruments of dissention between Great Britain and her Colonies, they openly cherished and encouraged them, and secretly gave them their confidence. It was by the intelligence they received in their correspondence with men of this description, that ministry had long been guided; these were their informers and directors; actuated by that displeasure and resentment which they felt, on account of the hatred and contempt they experienced from those over whom they ruled, they misrepresented them, and sought to render their dispositions unacceptable

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to government at home, by deſcribing them as ſtubborn and refractory.

But were the deſigning and intereſted repreſentations of official individuals ſolely and implicitly to be relied upon? Were they not neceſſarily influenced by views of emolument, to preſerve their places by courting their ſuperiors? They well knew the arbitrary turn of theſe, and humoured it accordingly: they eſpouſed and fed their inclinations and prejudices: they became, in ſhort, the faithful repreſentatives of their maſters.

Theſe were the ſources from whence flowed a copious meaſure of thoſe evils that now excited ſo much complaint. While men of this character were truſted, and made the confidential adviſers of thoſe who preſided at the head of a nation, what could be expected but deceit and impoſition, followed by a train of errors and miſconduct, ill fortune and calamity?

The employment of foreign troops to reduce America, was an object animadverted upon by oppoſition with peculiar violence and indignation. This, indeed, of all the miniſterial meaſures, met with the moſt acrimonious notice, both in and out of Parliament. It was repreſented as the completion of the deſpotic ſcheme, framed in the minds of imperious Governors, for the total inſlavement of an unfortunate people, who had been guilty of reſiſting their arbitrary authority.

Foreigners, ſaid oppoſition, were now taught that Britain, with all its boaſted greatneſs, could not find people at home to fight its battles. The ſucceſs of its projects depended upon the valour of ſtrangers: theſe were now to draw their ſwords in its defence, and to be the ſupporters of its intereſts and its reputation.

Who could behold ſo diſgraceful a meaſure, without feeling for that loſs of national honour which it

muſt occaſion? All Europe would view it in that light; and we ſhould henceforth ſuffer the mortification of being reputed much more converſant in the lucrative, than in the honourable arts, and of paſſing for a people averſe to the profeſſion of arms.

But excluſive of the diſgrace entailed upon our character, the danger of ſuch a ſyſtem was no leſs apparent. What reaſon had we to truſt an army of foreigners, who could poſſibly harbour no motives of enmity, to the people againſt whom they were to be employed? We ſhould be very cautious to whom we entruſted our arms in ſuch a quarrel; the country where theſe foreign ſuccours were to wage war for us, was preciſely that to which we had ſo often inticed numbers to emigrate from their native homes, by promiſes of more eaſe and happineſs than they could enjoy in their own country. America was, in fact, the promiſed land, repreſented by Great Britain to all the European nations, as the ſeat of freedom and felicity, prepared through her wiſdom and care for the reception of all thoſe who were tired of their condition at home, and willing to try their fortune in this new part of the world.

The majority of the ſoldiers, and many of the officers deſtined for our aſſiſtance, had been bred in rural occupations, and would need very little invitation to quit our ſtandards, and join a community, where they would find ſecurity from want and oppreſſion: the proſpect of enjoying eaſe and plenty, was a temptation which no man could reſiſt, who was daily experiencing the reverſe, and proferred the means to deliver himſelf from ſuch a ſituation.

The Americans themſelves were amazed that we ſhould have adopted ſuch a meaſure. Numbers of the inhabitants in ſome of the Colonies, were natives of thoſe parts from which theſe ſuccours were expected: they would not fail to influence

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many of theſe to come over to their friends and countrymen, and partake of the benefits and comforts of a land that was now become the refuge of all the unfortunate and diſtreſſed throughout Europe.

The landed intereſt was next appealed to. The gentry of England were ſeriouſly admoniſhed to conſider thoroughly the queſtion now before them. If futurity was to be conjectured by the paſt, with what hopes of ſucceſs could they vote for a miniſtry, that had undeviatingly trod a path of perpetual miſchance? Not one meaſure had ſucceeded of the many they had recommended; whatever they had propoſed and carried had produced either diſgrace or calamity; nothing, in a word, proſpered which they took in hand. This ſurely was a valid motive to ſuſpect that ſomething eſſentially erroneous was at the bottom of their projects.

After failing in ſo many undertakings, miniſtry now propoſed one of more importance and magnitude than any that had preceded. A mighty army was now to be tranſported over the ocean to North America; and a fleet no leſs formidable was to attend it. This numerous body of men were ſent to conquer America, every Province of which was under arms, and in daily expectation of the arrival of this terrible armament.

Here, continued oppoſition, let every man coolly attend to the reſpective ſituation of our people, and of the Americans. Theſe ſtanding on their own ground, and environed by their friends and all the reſources of a rich and fertile ſoil, provided with all the neceſſaries and comforts of life, at a cheap and eaſy rate: thoſe at an immenſe diſtance from every help, and expoſed to all manner of diſtreſs without expectation of relief; ſurrounded by enemies on ſea and land, exploring every latitude through which aſſiſtance might be brought, and ſtopping every channel of ſupply.

In this terrible poſition, with not an article requiſite for the ſuſtenance of life to be drawn from the ground where they are to be ſtationed, let prudent men reflect on that maſs of money which muſt be expended to find them in the moſt common and indiſpenſible neceſſaries: let them reflect that Engliſh markets muſt ſend them whatever is wanted for their conſumption; and let them not forget, that every article thus procured, muſt, at an immenſe price, be ſent to them acroſs the Atlantic ocean.

Thus it was clear, that difficulties of every deſcription would attend the expedition that was projected; and that nothing but ſucceſs would ſave the troops from falling into the hands of the Americans. They had no place of retreat; and no medium was left them, but to defeat the enemy, or to fly for ſhelter to their ſhips. This latter was an alternative of ſo ignominious a nature, that it was not doubted the Britiſh troops would indure every ſort of hardſhip, and face every danger, rather than recur to it. In which caſe it was much to be dreaded, from the greatneſs of their ſpirit, that after long ſtriving with inſurmountable obſtacles, and making the the moſt deſperate and fruitleſs efforts, they would at length, through the deſtructive conſequences neceſſarily attending the continual exertions of their valour, be ſo reduced, as to be compelled to give up the conteſt from abſolute inability to proſecute it.

But allowing that the forces intended for America, would be ſo numerous as to be completely able to keep the field, and repel the Americans, whatever ſucceſſes were obtained, would probably be purchaſed at a heavy price. Their knowledge of the country, and their expertneſs in the manner of fighting reſulting from its ſituation, would always render them a formidable enemy, notwithſtanding

the advantages of diſcipline and ſubordination in the Britiſh troops. But even theſe would be of much leſs utility in America than elſewhere; and thoſe who were the moſt converſant in European campaigns, would find, on their arrival there, that they would have much more to learn than they had been aware of, before they could be eſteemed completely qualified for the buſineſs committed to their charge.

In the mean time, however ſucceſsful they might prove in the field of battle, this would not deprive the Americans either of their courage or activity. It was no more than they expected: they did not give out that they intended to make any regular ſtand upon even ground, unleſs the ſuperiority of advantages were ſo manifeſt as to inſure a victory. They propoſed no more than to weary and harraſs our people by continual ſkirmiſhes; a mode of warring in which they were uncommonly ſkilful, by the quickneſs and dexterity with which they were known to handle their fire arms. The face of the country was ſo univerſally interſperſed with woods, rivers, defiles, and ſtrong holds, that they would never be at a loſs for advantageous poſitions, from whence it would be difficult to diſlodge them without ſacrificing multitudes.

In this manner the war might be protracted for a long ſpace of time, without affording the leaſt hope of a termination. Mean while we could not flatter ourſelves with uninterrupted ſucceſs: they too might hope to meet with lucky days, with this difference in their favour, that a repulſe or a defeat of the Britiſh troops, could not be repaired with equal celerity as among them, who might inſtantly be recruited from a variety of quarters; while a diminution of numbers on our ſide, would neceſſarily leave our troops in a ſtate of debility, and conſequently

sequently of inactivity, that would render the enemy master of his own time and operations, till our reinforcements arrived; during which interval, a variety of accidents might happen essentially detrimental to our interest, and impossible to prevent from the inadequateness of our strength to act with sufficient energy in the various and continual scenes of such a complication of hostilities.

Nor should it be forgotten, that through this incessant practice of arms, the Americans would gradually inure themselves to the dangers and feats of war, and become no less proficient than our own troops. To suppose a radical deficiency in that people, of those qualities that form a soldier, was not worthy of a serious answer: their behaviour upon sundry occasions in the late war, and since the commencement of the present hostilities, was an ample refutation of all surmises of this kind.

It was therefore highly probable, that in a moderate lapse of time, they would profit so well by the lessons we should have taught them, as to arrive at an equality in the regularity of discipline and science of tactics with our own people. As the certainty of this could not reasonably be called in question, it was an object deserving of the most serious consideration. As soon as they found themselves upon a parity with our troops in so material a point, they would of course become more fearless and enterprizing, and would seek every opportunity of encountering them that was not too hazardous and decisive. Prudence would forbid them to expose themselves to general engagements, but no occasion would be neglected to assail us in every quarter. The numbers that would be destroyed in this manner, would necessarily be considerable, and so effectually diminish our strength, as to put it out of our power to avail ourselves of those favourable occurrences,

currences, the improvement of which might require a larger force than that remaining in our poſſeſſion.

In the mean time, the expences concomitant on a war of this kind would be enormous. Small would be the ſupplies of neceſſaries from a country where every individual would make a merit of withholding or concealing them from our people, Force alone would procure us the means of ſubſiſtence where they could be found; but on this we might rely, that whatever could not be removed out of our reach, would be deſtroyed, ſooner than ſuffered to fall into our hands. In ſuch a ſituation it was clear that the charges of ſuch an army as was propoſed, would prove a burthen, the weight of which would more than any other contribute to render the countenance of war inſupportable.

Let it however be ſuppoſed that theſe prodigious efforts met with the deſired ſucceſs, and that after a deluge of blood ſpilt on both ſides, the ſlaughter ſhould ceaſe, through the complete overthrow of the American armies, what a ſpectacle would next appear to reward us for the havock we ſhould have made on that unhappy continent? Thoſe who had been witneſſes of the ravages committed during the laſt war in Germany, and of the recent deſolation in Poland, were beſt able to anſwer that queſtion.

Not however to exaggerate matters, what could a commercial ſtate propoſe by retaining the poſſeſſion of a country, after deſtroying, at a ruinous expence whatever made it worthy of preſervation? Populouſneſs, wealth, and induſtry, were the only objects Great Britain had in view, in ſettling and cultivating America, The eſtabliſhment of them upon the proſperous footing they were in at preſent, had coſt the nation immenſe ſums, and had required the labours and ſolicitude of near two centuries from their firſt foundation. Experience had taught mankind, that though the accompliſhment of their

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deſtruction might be a work of expedition and facility, yet it was a matter of great difficulty to effect their reſtoration. If in the impetuoſity of rage and vengeance this ſhould be the fate of America, what would be the emoluments of bringing it to ſubjection? The obſtinacy of the people there was known to be ſuch, that ſooner than ſubmit, they had reſolved, if unable to maintain their ground, to ſet fire to their towns and habitations, and retire into the interior parts of the land, where they would fix themſelves in places inacceſſible to our arms. Here they would continue unſubdued, and fatigue us by perpetual alarms and incurſions. Meanwhile the depredations and miſeries of war would have ruined the Provinces along the coaſt; ſlaughter and famine would have conſumed great numbers of the inhabitants; the remainder would be ſo broken and depreſt, that they would not think in ſuch a condition of renewing their former purſuits; they would loſe their vigour and activity, and confine themſelves to the procuring of a meer livelihood. Such was the uſual deſtiny of countries over-run and deſolated by the devaſtations of war.

With ſuch a proſpect before them, how were the people of England to be repaid the expences incurred in the reduction of America? The enormity of them exceeded all the uſual calculations in ſuch matters: European expeditions were no ſtandards whereby to meaſure them. The opulence of Great Britain, however immenſe, would not be found adequate to the aggregate of thoſe prodigious ſums that would of neceſſity be called for in the courſe of ſo tedious and remote an undertaking, and amidſt ſo vaſt a theatre of operations. Perſeverance in ſo many difficulties, would only increaſe them. An additional load of debt would be the unavoidable conſequence; but the realm was already ſo oppreſſed with taxes and duties of all denominations, that

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ſuch as were the moſt expert in contriving ways and means, were at a loſs where to diſcover any further reſources, even for the payment of the intereſt.

But on a ſuppoſition that funds could be found to anſwer all exigencies, what end would be attained in the ſubjugation of America but that of revenge? This might ſatisfy haughtineſs and rancour, but was it conſiſtent with policy to ſuffer ſuch motives to doom to perdition ſo extenſive and beneficial a commerce as that of our Colonies? It was in vain to flatter ourſelves that this would not be the caſe. The diſpoſition of the inhabitants would be reſtleſs in their endeavours to reſiſt and to expell us; this would be their ſole aim; they would chearfully conſent to a penurious life, and to hard fare in the ſtrong holds and faſtneſſes to which they would retire, rather than permit a quiet enjoyment of their country to an enemy. Thoſe who yielded to our power, and among whom we eſtabliſhed our quarters, would become indefatigable ſpies upon all our motions and deſigns, and give their countrymen ſuch perpetual intelligence, as would fruſtrate all attempts againſt them; while they, on the other hand, would not leave us a moment of quiet, and would defeat all our endeavours to reſtore obedience and tranquility.

In ſuch a light the conqueſt of America would be a meer deluſion. It would, in fact, become a ſcene of inceſſant warfare, and drain us of our men and our money in the ſame manner as has happened to Spain in that long courſe of fruitleſs and ruinous hoſtilities in the Low Countries, which entirely broke at laſt the ſtrength of that monarchy.

Deprived of one third of her trade, which was the proportion allowed to that of the Colonies, did Great Britain perceive from whence ſhe was to replace it? Fortunate accidents might eventually prevent her from ſinking under ſo dreadful a preſſure; but was it prudent to truſt to bare caſualties? The

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chances were evidently againſt her; all Europe was taken up in the improvement of commerce; every country cheriſhed the branches peculiar to it with an invidious partiality; and they all ſeemed to bare a marked enmity or envy to Britain.

All theſe were cogent motives to induce reaſonable and provident men, to relax in their reſentment to the Colonies, and not to indulge a revenge which would ultimately fall upon Great Britain. In private animoſities, men were often apt, by proſecuting them, to wound themſelves through the ſide of an enemy. This would inevitably be the caſe of Britain, if ſhe perſiſted in the determination to carry into execution the dreadful threats ſhe had denounced againſt America.

Such were the manifeſt and unexaggerated conſequences of the reduction of America, conſidered merely in a commercial view. But there was another of ſo alarming a nature, as ought alone to preponderate againſt all other conſiderations. This was the enormous increaſe of the military liſt, and of all its concomitances. Great complaints had often been made that unneceſſary numbers of troops were kept in pay; and that a militia alone ought to be entruſted with the guard and defence of a free country. But what would the murmurs of the nation be, when they beheld the vaſt armies that muſt be raiſed and maintained for the purpoſes now in contemplation.

The people of England were naturally jealous and fearful of any acceſſion of power to the Crown; but it would in the preſent caſe become inevitably more conſiderable than ever. What would render it more particularly an object of ſuſpicion and terror, would be the number of foreign troops taken into the Britiſh ſervice. Theſe being, like other military levies, entirely at the diſpoſal of the Crown, muſt give it ſuch a weight and influence, as could

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not fail to excite continual apprehenſions, and occaſion general umbrage.

After conſidering the conſequences of a war with America, ſhould the arms of Britain prove ſo ſucceſsful as to overcome the Americans in the field, and compel them to fly for refuge to the difficult receſſes and inacceſſible tracts in their back ſettlements, impartiality now required that the other ſide of the queſtion ſhould be attended to; and that we ſhould alſo duly examine, what our ſituation would be, in caſe we ſhould be unable to ſtand our ground upon that continent.

Many there were who would not even admit the poſſibility, much leſs the probability of ſuch an event: perſons of this ſort were not to be argued with; but as reaſon and experience had ſhown ~~thoſe~~ events of this deſcription had often come to paſs, it behoved every unprejudiced man to reflect on what muſt follow, ſhould the attempts of Britain be defeated.

Should we therefore meet with a reſiſtance too ſtrong and well conducted to be overcome; ſhould the Americans employ the many advantages reſulting from the diſtance of their ſituation, and the natural impediments of their country ſo ſkillfully and ſo fortunately as to foil us in our endeavours to ſubdue them; ſhould our troops on ſhore be waſted in fruitleſs attacks and expeditions, and our fleets prove unable to cut off thoſe ſupplies which either their own or foreign ſhipping would be employed to procure; if after a long, ſevere, and expenſive conteſt, Britain ſhould be neceſſitated to give it up, what would be her condition and circumſtances in caſe of ſuch a failure?

No nation upon earth is more ſuſceptible than the Engliſh, of the mortification ariſing from public diſgraces. It would be overwhelmed with grief and ſhame at the diminution of its glory, purchaſed at

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ſuch an expence of blood and and treaſure, and now tarniſhed in ſo unlooked for a manner. Both our political and martial character would ſuffer on this occaſion: we ſhould be taxed with want of prudence and foreſight: we ſhould be accuſed of defect in military abilities: we ſhould undergo all thoſe imputations which are the uſual concomitants of adverſe fortune. The eyes of Europe would be fixed upon us, in order to diſcover by what methods our diſtreſſes could be converted to the advantage of ſo many rivals; the dread we were held in no longer operating, we ſhould be expoſed to ill uſage and inſult, and obliged at laſt, perhaps, to turn our arms againſt theſe foreign aggreſſors, after having uſed them unſucceſsfully againſt our own people.

This was not the language of party and malevolence; it was founded on the probability of the ſame events befalling us, that had befallen other ſtates before, If the ſubject was duly conſidered, we had every reaſon to apprehend this would be our deſtiny. Every thing ſeemed to conſpire againſt our preſent meaſures, and to warn us to deſiſt from their proſecution. The ſtrength and preparations of America alone were an object highly deſerving of our reflections: it had been ſhown that we ſhould meet with infinite difficulties in contending with them. But who could remain ſo ignorant of European politics, as to entertain a moment's doubt, that America would be ſecretly, if not openly ſupported in her reſiſtance? It was unneceſſary to enumerate thoſe who would be ready to befriend her: the liſt was compoſed of every power that ſtood in awe of Britain; it was therefore numerous, and it behoved us to calculate well our own ſtrength, before we ventured to encounter with that of ſo many enemies.

Europe had long made it the capital maxim of her politics, to combine againſt every ſtate that was become

become formidable to the reſt. To this combination the United Provinces of the Netherlands owed, in a great meaſure, their emancipation from the Spaniſh yoke. After humbling Spain, the ambition of the Houſe of Auſtria was curbed by a like aſſociation. Another was afterwards formed againſt France with the ſame intent and ſucceſs; and now it was the turn of Great Britain to be oppoſed in the like manner.

Theſe were precedents that required our utmoſt attention, whenever we took into conſideration the affairs of our Colonies. We ſhould not delude ourſelves with a fond expectation, that the quarrel between Great Britain and America would be confined to theſe two combatants; as many would enter into it, as thought themſelves intereſted in thwarting us.

It was highly probable, therefore, that by attacking America, we ſhould involve ourſelves with all Europe. This would be a ſituation which the moſt ſanguine favourers of hoſtilities againſt the Colonies muſt allow to be very alarming. Yet they could not deny the juſtneſs of ſuch a ſurmiſe. Private and clandeſtine ſuccours of ammunition and warlike ſtores had already found their way from foreign parts into the harbours of America: this was a prelude, which would, with the more likelihood, lead to further aſſiſtance, as the partiality of the world to the Coloniſts was notorious, and the wiſhes of the major part of Europe were decidedly in their favour.

Notwithſtanding the opulence, the power, the ſpirit of Great Britain, could ſhe flatter herſelf with any well-founded hope, of being able to reſiſt the impreſſion that would be made upon her from every quarter of the world? It would be happy, were ſhe ſo obſtinate as to adhere to her preſent ſyſtem; if,

after loſing her Coloniſes, ſhe eſcaped herſelf from the dangers that would encompaſs her at home.

To what infatuation, therefore, was it owing, that menaced with ſuch evident and indubitable perils, ſhe would be ſo unadviſed as to affront them without abſolute neceſſity? When a nation's deareſt intereſts, or its honour are at ſtake, it cannot diſplay too much reſolution and intrepidity in the defence and preſervation of ſuch valuable objects: but when its motive for drawing the ſword is to aſſert uncertain and queſtionable rights, it cannot ſheath it too ſoon, when it perceives that the generality of mankind not only contradict its opinion, but have formed a confederacy in order the more effectually to reſiſt its views.

This was a fair and impartial ſtate of the queſtion, without favour or prejudice to any party. The queſtion itſelf was of ſuch magnitude and importance, that it was a great misfortune it ſhould be conſidered as liable to cauſe any other than a friendly and earneſt diſcuſſion among all true friends to this country, without exciting heats and animoſities, which had never been more unſeaſonable than at the preſent juncture.

Theſe arguments and repreſentations of the minority, were copiouſly anſwered by the ſupporters of government; who contended that they were evidently calculated to impreſs the public with an undue apprehenſion of the ſituation of national affairs, and to deter it from acting with ſpirit and deciſion.

The Americans, it was warmly aſſerted, aimed openly and explicitly at independence: to affirm the contrary, was equally weak and falſe. Had they not taken poſſeſſion of all the powers of government, levied forces, and raiſed money for their pay and ſuſtenance, iſſued bills of credit, and exerciſed every other act of ſoverignty? Their pretences of

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loyalty were contradicted by all their actions. While tranſmitting addreſſes and petitions to the Throne, they were preparing for an obſtinate continuance of war; and boaſted among themſelves of the ſtrength they had collected, and of the reſolutions and arrangements they had taken for that purpoſe. Their diſcourſes, their publications, their correſpondence, were full of the plans they were forming for the eſtabliſhment of the new conſtitution they had in view. They already ſpoke of America as a ſeparate ſtate, and as no longer intending to acknowledge any ſubordination to Great Britain. Who could, after ſuch unqueſtionable proofs of their deſigns, call them a dutiful and loyal people?

Were one even to allow the veracity of their profeſſions, what was their amount? An acknowledgment of the ſovereignty over them of the Monarch who wears the Crown of Britain. But does this acknowledgment include obedience to the legiſlative power, formed by that ſovereign and his Parliament? By no means: it goes no further than a ſuperficial undefined hommage, binding them to no obligation of compliance with the royal injunctions, and leaving them in the full poſſeſſion of all their claims.

Could confidence and reconciliation take place upon ſuch terms? All had been tried in order to effect them which the wiſdom of Parliament could ſuggeſt; but the obſtinacy of the Coloniſts was inflexible. They ſeemed regardleſs of the extremities to which all things were haſtening by the violence of their proceedings. They treated this country with equal contempt and ſuſpicion. They conſtrued its moderation into fear, and its forbearance into temporiſing.

Though Parliament had not formally given up the right of taxation; it had placed that matter on ſuch a footing, that the Colonies were authoriſed to tax

themſelves. But far from being ſatisfied with that permiſſion, they refuſed to exerciſe it as requeſted: no ſpecific ſum had been demanded; they were left at their own option to decide its amount; but ſuch was their unconciliating temper, that while they had full cauſe to be perſuaded that a moderate contribution would ſuffice, they would not even condeſcend to offer any.

Such behaviour made it evident, that as they no longer intended to pay any regard to the authority of Britain, no accommodation with them could be expected. Our duty was now to carry our terms in the one hand, and our ſword in the other: to behave otherwiſe would ſubject us to neglect, and render us contemptible.

Much had been inſiſted on the propriety of reverting to that ſituation in which the connection between Great Britain and America ſtood at the concluſion of the laſt war; but this was a difficult and complicated object; it involved the repeal of every act made ſince that period, and was, in fact, a ceſſion of the moſt neceſſary juriſdiction over the Colonies.

It was no longer time to inquire into the cauſes of the reſpective ſituation of Great Britain and her Colonies at this day. The buſineſs now in hand was to compoſe all differences between them, as effectually and as ſpeedily as poſſible. Both parties, as in moſt altercations, had been guilty of errors; but it was moſt adviſable to bury them in oblivion, and attend only to the cure of preſent diſorders. It were to be wiſhed, however, that thoſe who recommended this inquiry, would remember, in the intemperance of their zeal for America, that Great Britain was the country of which they were, by their perſonal ſituation, principally bound to conſult the welfare.

The meaſures propoſed by miniſtry were clearly dictated by neceſſity. Defiance was bidden to this country a

country; armies were raiſed, war proclaimed, and its lawful rights trampled upon. The Americans had now gone ſo far, that it was incumbent on us to meet them as their ſuperiors, and compel them to acknowledge their inferiority. It were ſhameful to diſplay leſs ſpirit than they manifeſted upon this occaſion. They had taken up arms to maintain an unjuſt revolt from their parent ſtate; but we were contending for juſtice, honour, and dominion.—We muſt either valiantly ſupport theſe pretenſions, or diſgracefully abandon the ſovereignty of America, and demean ourſelves in the eyes of all Europe.

The fate of Great Britain, as it had been often before, was now again in ſuſpence. After having for a long courſe of years, flouriſhed beyond any monarchy in Chriſtendom, it remained to be decided, whether this proſperity ſhould have any further duration. Should thoſe rich and powerful Colonies, the works of her hands, the fruits of her induſtry, planted with ſo much care, nurſed with ſuch conſtant attention, and guarded with ſo great anxiety, ſhould they, through the miſguided hands of their own people, be undutifully ſevered from the parent ſtate, and through the machinations of falſe friends to them, and ſecret foes to us, ungratefully become our declared enemies, ſuch a ſcene would be exhibited as had no precedent either in ancient or modern hiſtory.

It was to prevent ſuch a calamity that Britain had recourſe to arms. She was conſcious that a ſevere trial was at hand, but the ſooner ſhe entered the field, the leſs of difficulty ſhe ſhould have to encounter, as the enemy would be the leſs prepared. Much depended upon giving him no leiſure to form thoſe many arrangements he had projected; they were hoſtile in the higheſt degree, and ſhould therefore be obviated with the utmoſt expedition. After giving repeated proofs of patience, forbearance,

and an ardent desire of reconciliation, on the entire failure of every hope and expectation of this kind, the only measure now left to this country was to summon all her spirit and vigour, and to exert them effectually.

True it was, that to reduce America to obedience was an arduous task; but that was no argument against the attempt. It had lately been usual to represent the Americans as invincible upon their own ground, and that to endeavour at a subjugation of that country, would be labour lost: but such representations were calculated to dispirit and deter the British nation from acting with that courage and energy which were now requisite. Allowing the Americans to be brave and resolute, Englishmen were their equals at least in all military qualifications, and were not to be terrified by the description of the dangers and obstacles they were to meet with; they had surmounted as great; they had fought and overcome as valiant soldiers as the Americans.

Such insinuations were unworthy of the heads of a great and mighty people. Instead of thus striving to depress, their first care should be to exalt and invigorate the minds of the community. The more imminent the peril, the more strenuously they should study to inculcate fearlessness and intrepidity. By acting a contrary part, they laid themselves open to suspicions of their own fidelity and good wishes to the state.

There was no reason to despair of success in the undertaking the nation was so justly embarked in. The power of Great Britain had been experimentally found adequate to the most surprising atchievements. She had in the last war overthrown the collected might of the whole House of Bourbon; she had supported the King of Prussia against all the northern powers of Europe; she had reigned absolute mis-

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treſs at ſea; ſhe had conquered for her rebellious children that region which they now threatened to tear from her dominion.

The ſtrength and reſources of Britain had long been the aſtoniſhment of all nations. In proportion as her difficulties increaſed, her genius and abilities had kept equal pace with them. No power that ever contended with Great Britain had been benefitted by the conteſt. She was envied, but ſhe was no leſs feared. Thoſe who deſired her humiliation were no doubt numerous; but this was not to be accompliſhed without expoſing themſelves to her reſentment; and in whatever ſituation ſhe might be, her courage was known to be invincible; and it was uſually in the very worſt extremities that her efforts were moſt daring and ſucceſsful.

European politics were now ſo buſily taken up with the concerns of America, that every motion of this country was watched, in expectation of profiting through its errors. Such was the language of thoſe who wavered in their reſolutions, or who ſought to invalidate the juſtneſs of the meaſures now adopted againſt the Colonies. It were indeed unwiſe in any miniſtry to overlook what was doing on the continent of Europe; but there would be leſs wiſdom ſtill to make our arrangements depend on the conſultations of foreign courts. This would be ſubjecting us to their management in ſuch a degree, as would quickly deſtroy the reſpect and influence we were wont to command. While we acted with prudence, we needed not to look abroad for approbation and conſent; ſucceſs and proſperity would always inſure them; the regard paid by ſtates to each other, was directed wholly by this motive.

It would be weak and ſpiritleſs to refrain from doing ourſelves juſtice, merely from the apprehenſion of interference in favour of the Americans. This was at moſt a chance in the ſcale againſt us, the-

weight of which we might never feel, though it was now ſo heavily anticipated. The way to prevent it, was to put ourſelves in ſuch a poſture of defence, as to take away all inclination to moleſt us from thoſe whom we ſuſpected of ſuch intentions. When they ſaw that no motives whatever were able to daunt us, and that we were prepared for the worſt, the remembrance of what this nation had done, and the conviction of what it was able to do, when rouſed by neceſſity, and impelled by its native ſpirit, would probably cool the warmth of its moſt inveterate enemies.

The reputation and the intereſt of the Britiſh nation had never been ſo thoroughly united before in ſo dangerous a conteſt. Its importance ought to ſilence all leſſer contentions. Whether miniſtry or oppoſition argued with moſt acuteneſs on the ſubject, ought no longer to employ a moment's thought. The Colonies were in arms againſt Great Britain; the conſtitutional authority of the realm had pronounced them guilty of rebellion, and had appointed an armed force to reduce them to obedience.—Whoever, therefore, was a true friend to the kingdom, would ceaſe to oppoſe the deciſions of a lawful majority, and not diſcourage the proſecution of thoſe meaſures, of which the ſucceſs depended ſo eſſentially on the ſteadineſs and uninterruption with which they were purſued.

Such was the general purport of the replies made by the friends of the miniſtry to the reaſonings of their opponents. The ſpace of a whole night was conſumed in the debates upon the Royal ſpeech: it was near five in the morning when the motion proceeding from the oppoſition was rejected, by two hundred and ſeventy-eight, againſt one hundred and eight.

This was, in the apprehenſion of all men, a complete and deciſive victory over the endeavours of

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the American party to prevail upon Parliament to make further conceſſions to the Colonies. The conciliatory motion was looked upon as fair ground for a treaty. It was thought to comprehend the ſubſtance of all they could wiſh; to reject it, therefore, was conſidered as a plain, unequivocal proof, that they were not ſincere in their proteſtations of amity to this country; and that whatever terms might be laid before them, they would ſtill find reaſons to alledge againſt their acceptance.

In ſuch a perſuaſion, it was not difficult to diſpoſe a majority of the members in Parliament, as well as of the nation at large, to concur in a final determination to commit the cauſe of the kingdom to the deciſion of arms. So much had been ſpoken and written concerning the ſubject in queſtion, it had been agitated ſo many years without coming to a concluſion; it had, on the contrary, become ſo perplexed, and was now entangled in ſo many arguments, that people had loſt all patience, and were thoroughly convinced that the only way to end it, was by a trial of ſtrength.

The truth was, that like all other momentous queſtions between two great national bodies, the controverſy was carried on with ſo much vehemence and acrimony on both ſides, that the ſeeds of miſchief were ſown betimes, and began to make their appearance ſoon after the very commencement of the diſpute. It was attended with another circumſtance that contributed to embitter it in the ſevereſt degree. One of the parties concerned aſſumed a ſtile of ſuperiority, to which, from its relative ſituation reſpecting the other, it thought no more than its due. But the other, though exteriorly compliant with long received forms, had attained and felt a ſtrength and importance, that made this compliance uneaſy. This ſenſation, though it operated imperceptibly, was a perpetual incentive to the paſ-

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ſions of a high-ſpirited people. It ſtimulated them to aſſert and maintain their conſequence upon every occaſion that offered. The leſs they preſumed to do it in words and expreſſions, the more effectually they always did it by their deeds and tranſactions.

A conteſt of ſuch a nature, could not fail, in its progreſs, to be productive of many ſubjects of reciprocal irritation. Sometimes the habitual notions of ſuperior dignity would induce the one party to inſiſt upon the points in debate with a warmth bordering upon haughtineſs; ſometimes the firmneſs of ſentiments inſpired by conſcioufneſs of freedom, would impel the other to expreſs himſelf with a boldneſs little differing from defiance. From incidents of this kind, offence and reſentment reciprocally aroſe. The one was taxed with arrogance, the other with audacity.

From this mutual ſtrife, proceeded partial inveſtigations of each others reſpective merits, the reſult of which was favourable to neither. The one was accuſed of pride, ambition, and avarice; the other of ingratitude, petulance, and ſelfiſhneſs. In the mean time both pleaded the multiplicity of ties that had linked them together for ſuch a multitude of years: but the one complained they were made a pretence to exerciſe the authority of a maſter; the other, that the remembrance of the benefits to which they had given occaſion, was totally obliterated.

Great Britain could not forget in what manner the firſt ſettlers had gone forth under the ſhelter of her wings, and with what vigour ſhe had protected them in the plenitude of her power. Her Colonies as readily reminded her, with what expedition their induſtry repaid her aſſiſtance, and how effectually they had co-operated towards her proſperity and ſplendour. In the various enumeration of ſervices rendered to each other, they could not always refrain from over-balancing the account: hence followed

lowed reproaches, taunts, and malevolent infinuations; and at length, jealouſy, ſuſpicion, and enmity.

When they had arrived thus far, it was eaſy to perceive that the altercation of which theſe bickerings had proved the collateral attendants, would derive its final iſſue from their influence. Prejudice, partiality, and reſentment, had by this time taken poſſeſſion of the minds of men on both ſides the Atlantic. Together with the natural deſire of gaining the point in litigation, they were prompted by a ſecret antipathy to each other, that rendered them averſe to condeſcendence. Thus both meeting on the long beaten ground of this fatal conteſt, with a reſolution not to yield, the deciſion became a forlorn hope, and was left to the contingency of thoſe events, to which, when they cannot agree about any other method of ſettling their differences, mankind have been uſed to make their laſt appeal.

Such were the ſteps by which two people, ſprung from the ſame origin, and long united by the bonds of intereſt and conſanguinity, became at length totally divided in ſentiments, affections, and government; and from harmonizing in all public matters with the moſt perfect concord and friendlineſs, proceeded at laſt to the oppoſite extremes of diſſention and enmity.

Both people were now beginning to loſe thoſe feelings for each other, which language, religion, relationſhip, and a variety of ſuch motives, had once contributed to render ſo ſtrong. But this unhappy difference had gradually weakened them to ſuch a degree, that they hardly ſubſiſted any where, ſave in the remembrance of the parties. Inſtead of that chearfulneſs and cordiality with which they met and converſed with each other, ſuch as had lived together in habits of intimacy, were become cautious in the diſcloſure of their thoughts. Suſpici-

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ouſneſs had now taken the place of confidence, and they guarded againſt each other as ſpies and enemies.

In ſo irkſome a ſituation of mind, they naturally ſtood aloof, and were inclined to no communication excepting with thoſe whom they knew to be ſtaunch friends to their reſpective cauſe. Hence England and America, from being the favourite objects of their reciprocal ſpeculations, aſſumed the appearance of countries indifferent to them. They were ſpoken of, together with what related to them, as an Engliſhman converſes about France, and a Frenchman about England.

Thus they were completely weaned from thoſe conſiderations that had formerly proved the occaſion and the cement of ſo much friendſhip and goodwill between private individuals, and of courſe, had influenced ſo powerfully the public connection between the two countries.

Theſe were melancholy reflections to perſons of humanity, who had been witneſſes of the concord and benevolence that had ſubſiſted in Britain and in the Colonies, between all ſubjects indiſcriminately. They could not recal without emotion, thoſe happy times, when the natives of America, ſuch even as had not been out of their country, never ſpoke of England but as their home.

In the midſt of theſe reſentments and heart-burnings, the Colonies were particularly exaſperated at the introduction of foreign troops into this quarrel. They looked upon this meaſure as an unanſwerable proof, that all regard for their character, as Engliſhmen, was fled; and that Great Britain viewed them as ſtrangers, whom, if ſhe could not conquer and enſlave, ſhe was determined to deſtroy. This perſuaſion excited their moſt violent indignation; they conſidered themſelves as abandoned to plunder and maſſacre, and that Britain was unfeelingly bent

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on their ruin, by whatſoever means ſhe could compaſs it.

While the Coloniſts repreſented this meaſure in ſo ſanguinary a light, it was depicted at home in the ſame colour by their partiſans. It was even reprobated by many individuals, who were not averſe to the other parts of the miniſterial plan, but who could not bring themſelves to approve of the interference of foreign mercenaries in our domeſtic feuds. It was condemned as a precedent full of danger to the conſtitution, and as an inſtrument, which in the hands of an artful and daring miniſter, might, on a future occaſion, be converted to the moſt iniquitous purpoſes. After employing it at a diſtance, it might upon various pretences be brought nearer home; and we ſhould then feel the conſequences of having given encouragement and countenance to a project of ſo pernicious a tendency.

It was not only throughout the public at large this meaſure occaſioned ſo much diſcontent: after having in Parliament undergone the keeneſt cenſure of the oppoſition, it fell under the diſpleaſure of a conſiderable number of thoſe who ſided with the miniſter, and were generally uſed to ſupport the meaſures of government; but on this occaſion they loudly diſſented from them. Several quitted the Houſe without voting; others who voted in his favour, obliged him previouſly to give them an aſſurance that he would remove all their doubts and ſcruples, and ſatisfy them clearly upon this ſubject.

The conſtitution, it was argued, militated in the moſt direct and particular manner againſt all proceedings of this kind. Such an attempt to bring a military force into the Britiſh dominions was repugnant to law, and ſubverſive of the rights eſtabliſhed at the Revolution. No ſuch prerogative was acknowledged in the Crown. No troops

could be raiſed without conſent of Parliament; much leſs was it authoriſed to call in a foreign army. Strangers were no proper perſons to commit the guard of the realm to, without the utmoſt neceſſity; nor even then without the matureſt deliberation of Parliament, and without its formal and explicit approbation.

They who approved of the meaſure, pleaded the neceſſity of the times. Troops were immediately wanted, and the greateſt expedition was required. Delays were the ruin of all military enterpriſes. The ſtrongeſt promiſes had been made by Parliament of a zealous concurrence with the Crown, in taking every proper ſtep to reduce the Colonies to obedience: it ought not therefore to be obſtructed in its very firſt endeavours.

Some there were, who ſupported this meaſure on the ground of precedent. This country had ſeen a conſiderable body of ſtrangers come to its aſſiſtance in the rebellion of forty-five; and in the commencement of the late war. The revolution itſelf was partly due to foreign aid. In the preſent inſtance, the force alluded to was intended for the ſuppreſſion of a revolt in a diſtant part of the Britiſh dominions: no candid perſon would alledge, that any danger could ariſe to the liberty of this iſland, from employing that force three thouſand miles on the other ſide of the Atlantic ocean.

But whatever arguments were uſed in vindication of this meaſure, its general danger appeared ſo real, and the reaſonings of its opponents ſo juſtly founded, that it was judged neceſſary to abandon the defence of its legality. In order to quiet the minds of ſuch as were alarmed upon this account, aſſurances were given, that it ſhould undergo a Parliamentary reviſal, and be diſpoſed of according to the judgment of the Houſe.

In the mean time, the proſpect of a continuation of hoſtilities in America began to offend a multitude

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of perſons in this country. They had felt much diſpleaſure at thoſe that had taken place already; but they had flattered themſelves, that on a ſerious conſideration of the detrimental conſequences that would reſult from them to both countries, the cool and moderate of both parties would ſtep in, and exert themſelves effectually to bring about an accommodation, before the fury of the contendants had riſen too high to be controuled.

Among thoſe whoſe perſonal character gave the greateſt weight to their diſapprobation of hoſtilities, was General Conway. His political principles had been ſteadily marked with temperateneſs and caution. He had long ſtrove to divert the ſtorm he had ſeen gathering; but the times were ſo tempeſtuouſly inclined, that he had failed like many others. He now explicitly united with oppoſition in reprobating the American war: he declared the conqueſt of that country equally inexpedient and impracticable. Notwithſtanding the act aſſerting the legiſlative authority of Great Britain had paſſed during his adminiſtration, he expreſſed the moſt fervent wiſh it ſhould be repealed ſooner than ſtand in the way of reconciliation.

He was joined by others in challenging the miniſtry to lay before the Houſe ſome ſatisfactory account of the preſent ſtate of affairs in America, as it was incumbent on Parliament to act with its eyes open, in the buſineſs that was now coming before it. Much was demanded from the nation; a proſpect was opening which filled it with anxiety; it was not judicious to proceed further, without knowing upon what ground it ſtood.

The intelligence arriving daily from America, was very unfavourable. The ſituation of the troops at Boſton was ſo critical, that their very ſafety was ſometimes a matter of doubt. Though official accounts had not tranſpired, it was well known that

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the affairs of Britain in that quarter were in great diſorder; and that notwithſtanding the goodneſs of the troops, and the valour of their commander, they were hard preſſed by the enemy, and in a very diſtreſſed condition.

It was urged, upon this occaſion, as it had been often before, by the friends to vigour and deciſiveneſs, that the capital fault lay in ſetting out upon the great and arduous buſineſs propoſed, with a force inadequate to its execution and importance. While a ſtrength worthy of ſo vaſt an undertaking was not called forth, it would never be accompliſhed, and would only lead this country into further difficulties, errors, and misfortunes, till that power was waſted piecemeal in fruitleſs efforts, which, had it been at once collected, would have made an effectual impreſſion.

Thoſe who defended the conduct of miniſtry, repreſented the impediments concomitant on the ſituation of thoſe at the helm in ſuch a country as Britain. Abilities and experience, however acknowledged, would not apologize with the public for going beyond the line of cautiouſneſs and circumſpection, before its ſanction had been obtained for bolder meaſures: but this depended upon ſo many contingencies, that before it was compaſſed, time often ſtole away the opportunities of deſerving it. Miniſters were not ignorant, that for great undertakings, great efforts were neceſſary; but had ſuch a force been demanded on the determination of proceeding to coercive meaſures, as was ſuggeſted by men of bold and extenſive ideas, it was much to be feared the demand would have been anſwered with refuſal.

Inſtructed by events, it was not however to be doubted that miniſtry would regulate the ſteps that were to be taken, according to the nature of exigencies. The progreſs made by the Americans during

during the laſt twelvemonth, in increaſing their ſtrength, and preparing for defence, had exceeded all reaſonable expectation. It had not been imagined that ſuch numbers would have betaken themſelves to arms. But as that was the caſe, Great Britain muſt of neceſſity proportion her ſtrength to theirs. The late operations in New England had been formed according to the informations that were judged the moſt to be relied on. It had been boaſted among the oppoſition, that they were much better informed; if ſo, it was their duty to have laid aſide their private piques, and to have aſſiſted the public with their advice. Miniſtry did not pretend to infallibility; but they had conſulted likelihood; and if their plans had hitherto not ſucceeded to their wiſhes, it had not been for want of due care and preparation.

Much diſtreſs and miſery had been foretold to Britain from the proſecution of a war with our Colonies. The prediction was admitted; but on the other hand, much more would fall upon the Colonies themſelves. It were to be deſired, that for their own ſake, they were convinced of this truth, as it would preſerve them from a number of calamities, and Great Britain from the mortification of inflicting them. Their ſituation was ſuch, that from the naval ſuperiority of this country, their trade would, in all probability, be utterly ruined, and their coaſts would be expoſed to our attacks on every ſide.

Theſe were indeed no matters of triumph to an Engliſhman; but as oppoſition took a manifeſt delight in magnifying the difficulties that would accompany the project of reducing America by force of arms, as the ſpirit and ſtrength of the Coloniſts were deſcribed in the moſt alarming manner, and little hopes were allowed to be entertained of ſucceeding againſt them, it was a duty which miniſtry

owed to the nation, to diſſipate the apprehenſions which theſe exaggerated repreſentations might have occaſioned, and to lay before the public a juſt and true ſtate of affairs, without increaſing or diminiſhing the powers of the enemy, that the nation might be convinced, that by leading forth its armies againſt the Colonies, a reſolute, but not an impracticable buſineſs, had been undertaken.

The preſent appearances might not, indeed, be promiſing from the vaſt inequality of the reſpective force now in action; but that deficiency would ſoon be remedied, and a ſufficient number of troops be brought into the field, to recover and ſecure a footing of ſuperiority. The Colonies would not preſume to face, on equal ground, ſuch an army as was deſigned to act againſt them; and allowing them all thoſe military virtues with which the zeal of their partiſans was ſo ready to endow them, ſtill the advantages of knowledge and experience in the officers, of practice and veteranſhip in the ſoldiers, and of eminent abilities in the commanders, would be ſuch, as to compel every unprejudiced obſerver to acknowledge, that the probability of ſucceſs lay incomparably on the ſide of Great Britain.

Uncommon ſtreſs had been laid on the patriotiſm of the Coloniſts, and that they would ſubmit to diſtreſs much more chearfully than our people: this alone, it was ſaid, would be an inexhauſtible fund, where the conteſt on the one ſide was for glory and dominion, but on the other for property and freedom, motives much more powerful and cogent than the former. All this was ſpecious, and ſounding in the ears of ſuch as liſtened only to one ſide of the queſtion: but whoever attended to the common courſe of human tranſactions, would perceive that without an adequate ſupply of what mankind have ſo juſtly, as well as emphatically, ſtiled the ſinews of war, the moſt obſtinate courage muſt yield at laſt

to thoſe who poſſeſs them. The ſituation of America in this reſpect was extremely critical: the quantity of ſpecie throughout the Colonies, was no object; their pecuniary correſpondence depended wholly upon commercial articles given and taken in exchange: the Congreſs had been obliged to emit a large ſum in paper money, for the ſubſiſtence of their troops, and other neceſſary expences: the warmth and ferment now high among them, had facilitated its acceptance and circulation at the preſent, and might keep it awhile in motion; but when people ſaw that it commanded no ſpecie, they would ſoon hold it cheap, and decline ſo precarious a ſecurity: this would not fail to throw matters into confuſion: whatever attachment people might profeſs for government, a depreciation of the public currency was ſo directly connected with every individuals immediate concerns, that nothing would ſooner diſcredit a ſtate, and leſſen the zeal of thoſe who ſupported it.

Such, according to all the rules of probability, would very ſhortly be the ſituation of America. It would then remain to be ſeen, whether the perſeverance of the Coloniſts, would be proof againſt the hardſhips that would inevitably follow from the want of money, and of trade to procure it. No man could take upon him to aſcertain events; but unleſs an extraordinary concourſe of fortuitous accidents came to the aſſiſtance of the Americans, no likelihood appeared that they would be able to extricate themſelves out of theſe difficulties, any more than that they could poſſibly avoid them.

It was upon ſpeculations of this kind, founded in the nature of things, and conſtantly verified by experience, that miniſtry built the expectation of ſucceeding in the meaſures it had taken to reduce the Colonies. It entertained too great a reſpect for the mighty nation, by whom it was entruſted with

the management of its affairs, to expoſe it upon meer preſumption to ſo vaſt and arduous an enterprize. But as its honour and intereſt were equally concerned on the one hand, and there was a well-grounded proſpect of ſucceſs on the other, miniſtry was bound in duty to omit no opportunity of aſſerting them to the utmoſt of its abilities.

The power of the Britiſh nation was great and unqueſtionable; but the reſources of America were uncertain: nothing but a blind infatuation, exiſted and cheriſhed by a factious combination, could have plunged the Coloniſts into a war, the waging of which muſt be ruinous, and the iſſue very doubtful at beſt. The violence and impetuoſity which ruled them at preſent, took away both their capacity and inclination to reflect with coolneſs on their proceedings. But it was not to be ſuppoſed, that when brought into ſtraits, they would not make due compariſons between the price they were paying for the rights they claimed, and the mild dependence they lived in, while acknowledging the ſovereignty of Great Britain. Reflections of this kind would come with additional weight in the day of calamity and diſtreſs; and that this day would ſpeedily arrive, was not to be controverted. From the combined influence of theſe conſiderations on the one hand, and the vigorous preſſure of the Britiſh arms on the other, the moſt lively hope might be formed, that a proſperous termination would be put to the conteſt. This hope was nouriſhed with the more fervour, as it was reſolved that the clemency of Great Britain ſhould be held out to the Colonies in ſo inviting and powerful a manner, that nothing but the moſt obdurate and unaccountable obſtinacy ſhould be able to withſtand it.

With reaſonings to this effect did miniſtry reply to the arguments of oppoſition in both Houſes; but

But in that of the Peers they met with other cauſes to exerciſe their abilities and to alarm them.

A nobleman of very high rank, (the Duke of Grafton) who had once held the firſt place in adminiſtration, and had ſided with it till now, declared his determination to proceed no further in the meaſures that were proſecuting againſt America. He complained that he had been led thus far by deception and erroneous information; that ſome facts had been withheld from his knowledge, and others miſrepreſented; owing to this he had countenanced meaſures, which, otherwiſe, he ſhould never have approved. To compel America to ſubmit by force of arms, was entirely foreign to his intention: he ſupported this idea, from a conviction that no more was meant than to hold it out as a commination to the refractory Coloniſts: it was by no means to be realized, as it was aſſerted by thoſe who adviſed it, that an intimidation of this ſort would ſuffice to ſhake the reſolution of the Colonies, and bring them to the terms deſired. Had he been as well acquainted with the real ſituation of America, as he was at preſent, he never would have coincided with a threat of ſuch a nature, and would have laboured for a reconciliation by means more acceptable to their diſpoſition.

The reſult of his maturer thoughts and better knowledge led him to conclude, that an entire repeal was neceſſary of all the acts relating to America, paſſed ſince the concluſion of the laſt war, and that had been productive of diſcontent. They were ſuch as could be completely diſpenſed with, and did not affect the ſovereignty of Great Britain; but they weighed heavy upon the Colonies, and had contributed to perpetuate differences between them and this country, without procuring it any utility. The reſtoration of peace and union was of ſuch conſequence, that no other motives ſhould be ſuffered to ſtand in the way. Of whatever importance they

might appear, they were but of a ſecondary conſideration, when compared with the indiſpenſible neceſſity of an immediate reconciliation with the Colonies.

It was urged alſo from other quarters, that the conſequences of delaying to conclude this tedious conteſt, were becoming every day more ſerious. It would ſoon be paſt all remedy, if we waited for a renewal of hoſtilities. Another campaign, whether proſperous or adverſe, would fix both parties in ſuch habits of hoſtility, as would render them indifferent to an accomodation, and induce them to carry the trial of their reſpective abilities in the field much farther than they entertained any conception of at preſent. Thus they would go on ſhedding each others blood, to the great ſatisfaction of the enemies of Britain, who in this reciprocal ſlaughter of her ſubjects, would enjoy the long wiſhed for period of that formidable power, which as it had ariſen from their union, would now terminate with their diſcord.

Theſe were conſequences which every man foreſaw, who did not flatter himſelf with vain conjectures, which ſtood on no other foundation than abſtract and ſpeculative reaſonings. But however plauſible theſe might ſeem to fancy, they would not ſtand the teſt of judgment. The caſe between Great Britain and America was ſingular, and had no precedent. The moſt curious inveſtigator in ancient or modern hiſtory, would find no tranſaction exactly correſponding with it. That which bore the neareſt ſimilitude, was the defection of the Low Countries from Spain; but here, though in ſome reſpects the cauſes of diſſention were not unlike, yet there was a prodigious difference between the relative ſtrength of the Spaniſh monarchy at that æra, and that of Britain at this preſent day. Spain was miſtreſs of the faireſt parts of Europe, and of

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all America; in the East Indies she was without a competitor; she was the only naval power in being; that of England was in its infancy; she had the most numerous standing army, and her officers and soldiers were incomparably the best disciplined of any. With all these advantages, she was not able to reduce the Seven United Provinces of the Low Countries.

The situation of Great Britain with regard to her Colonies, was very far from being so advantageous. they formed an extensive country, full of interior impediments to an enemy: they were inhabited by hardy and resolute men, inured to the use of arms, and passionately fond of freedom. But that which principally secured them was their immense distance. They lay three thousand miles off; ambition could not approach them without an enormous expence. This alone was a barrier, that would, in the course of events, prove insurmountable; it would weaken and weary out their enemies, by exhausting them of their treasures, and oblige them to give over for want of means to continue.

If Spain failed in her attempt on the Dutch in the very zenith of her power, could Britain expect to reduce the Americans, with much fewer incitements to hope for success? She ought to take warning from the calamities that befel that ambitious monarchy, in consequence of her obstinately persisting, in spite of repeated failures, in her iniquitous endeavours to enslave a people who were struggling for their just rights. With such a lesson before her, she ought to retract in time, lest she should, in her turn, be held up as another proof of the woeful effects of haughtiness and obstinacy.

Were it even allowed that Britain's cause was a just one, was the mutual effusion of so much blood by the hands of friends and brethren, to be justified by the laws of humanity? The contest was, in fact,

about claims much more punctilious than essential; were they to be renounced for ever, the interest of Britain would receive no detriment. Dignity was the term now appropriated to the pride which this country assumed towards her Colonies: but could that justify the imprudence of venturing the loss of solid and substantial prosperity and grandeur? This was a method of proceeding reconcileable neither with conscience or honour. Had Britain been insulted by a foreign power, it behoved her, unless the offence was indeed very grievous, to avoid all methods of requiring satisfaction that tended to a breach of peace; much less could she alledge any valid reason to draw the sword upon her own subjects, who had expressed the strongest desire to remain connected with her as before, and whose conduct was loudly applauded by the world, and condemned by none but herself.

To these arguments others were added, similar to those that had been adduced by the opposition in the other House; such as the unimportance of a conquest that must be effected by the ruin of a country; the improbability of effecting it; and if such an end were attained, the unconquerable difficulties that would prevent Great Britain from retaining the Colonies any length of time. It was observed that by adopting the system of hostilities, an end was instantly put to the great multiplicity of benefits continually derived to this country from its connection with them; as these benefits arose from peace and friendly intercourse, the suspension of these would of course interrupt them; and if war and bloodshed were of any duration, would, by extinguishing former confidence and amity, destroy them perhaps for ever.

These were vigorous and impressive attacks upon the ministry. They did not deny the imperfectness of their information in some matters, but pleaded the impracti-

impracticability of obtaining ſuch knowledge as might have prevented ſeveral diſappointments. They were obliged to depend on the ſagacity and judgment of thoſe whom they truſted. Their correſpondents were at an immenſe diſtance, and liable to be miſtaken themſelves in the opinions which they formed of men and their deſigns. They had taken all poſſible pains to proceed upon ſure grounds, and had duly weighed every meaſure that had been enforced.—But it would be unjuſt to make them anſwerable for failures, that were occaſioned by events totally unforeſeen and unexpected by the ſhrewdeſt perſons upon the ſpot: to ſuch alone muſt be attributed the general want of ſucceſs in the plans propoſed and purſued in the courſe of the preſent year.

There were two remarkable inſtances of this kind; the one was the total alteration of circumſtances in the Province of New York; the other was the implicit acquieſcence of the Southern Colonies in the views and arrangements of the Northern. Theſe were events that accelerated with irreſiſtible rapidity the revolution of affairs throughout the whole continent, and equally ſurprized the miniſtry, who, from their intelligence, were well founded in apprehending no ſuch unhappy turn.

But it was the part of men at the head of nations, to view theſe viciſſitudes with coolneſs and reſolution. It would argue debility of mind to be terrified by ſuch occurrences from the proſecution of a plan that was neceſſary to be adopted at all events, and in the carrying on of which people muſt be weak indeed to imagine that all would be ſmooth and eaſy. The plan ſuppoſed a variety of impediments, and had accordingly made ſuitable preparations to encounter them. But in a trial of this ſort, mankind, after hoping and providing for the beſt, ought not to be aſtoniſhed were the whole project to be defeated. Such was often the fate of the beſt con-

certed

certed and the moſt judicious; but this was no valid objection to the undertaking of them, when they were authoriſed by juſtice and propriety.

After a long and warm debate, the motion for an addreſs ſimilar to that of the Houſe of Commons, was carried by ſeventy-ſix votes againſt thirty-three.

A proteſt was drawn up againſt it, and ſigned by nineteen Peers; in which they condemned, with the utmoſt freedom and aſperity, the war commenced againſt America. They cenſured, with equal ſeverity, the employing of foreign troops, and various other parts of the miniſterial conduct.

In the mean time, as none of the meaſures adopted by adminiſtration gave more umbrage than this employment of foreign troops, oppoſition determined to bring it before Parliament in the moſt ſolemn and ſerious manner.

A motion was accordingly made in the Houſe of Lords, declaring that to take ſuch a ſtep, without the previous conſent of Parliament, was dangerous and unconſtitutional, as being clearly againſt law. By venturing on ſuch a meaſure, miniſtry had given the conſtitution a wound, which unleſs cured with all ſpeed, would become mortal. Though the intention might be innocent, the example would be fatal. It was by gradual ſteps that all miſchief proceeded; and this ought to be arreſted in its firſt entrance into this kingdom, if we meant to give it an effectual expulſion. The ſubject was of no leſs importance than that of America itſelf. This extenſive part of the Britiſh empire being probably loſt for ever, men ſhould, in times ſo pregnant with danger to liberty, be vigilant in preſerving the remainder free. It was our freedom that we chiefly valued ourſelves upon; but foreigners, few of whom enjoyed it in their own country, knew not how to appraiſe its worth, and would therefore feel no re-

morſe in depriving us of it, were we ſo imprudent as to put ourſelves into their power. Were it allowable to introduce foreign forces into the kingdom, a door would be thrown open, through which they might ſoon enter in ſufficient numbers to occaſion univerſal alarm.

Adminiſtration denied, on the other hand, that this meaſure offended either the ſpirit or the letter of the Bill of Rights, the great palladium of Engliſh liberty ſince the Revolution. This bill forbad the introduction of a military force into the kingdom during peace; but the times certainly were not peaceable; and they were not to be brought into the realm. Did the meaning of that bill extend even to its dependencies, ſtill, in the preſent caſe, the meaſure was highly juſtifiable, as the intention was evidently to quell a rebellion.

The competency of the Crown to levy and maintain troops during war, in any part of its dominions, had never been diſputed. The Bill of Rights made no ſpecification of Engliſh or foreigners in this matter. Theſe had, at various times, at, and ſince the Revolution, been brought into the realm for its defence. Theſe too were times peculiarly marked by the warmth of the people at large for the preſervation of their liberties; and yet this ſtep had been taken without the formal conſent of Parliament. In the preſent inſtance, neceſſity ſtrongly pleaded for it, and rendered it by no means a matter of choice.

Oppoſition replied, that the formality of obtaining the conſent of Parliament was the more requiſite, as times of war are attended with peculiar danger, and people ſhould be more upon their guard at thoſe, than at any other ſeaſons. It had generally happened in moſt countries, that public freedom had been invaded and loſt by armies that had been raiſed to protect the ſtate from foreign

enemies.

enemies. Europe had been enflaved in this manner. Taught by theſe precedents, and by the imminent danger this nation had experienced in the reigns of the two laſt Stuarts, it was the duty of the guardians of this kingdom to prevent its being involved in the common deſtiny of ſo many others, by enforcing that bill, which was framed in conſequence of theſe dangers.

The ſpirit of this bill extended to every part of the Britiſh dominions. What ſafety could there be to the liberty of England, if troops ſurrounded it on every ſide, ready at a moment's warning to be wafted over? Neither was the diſtinction of native and foreign troops a matter of indifference.—Was it reaſonable to think, that Engliſhmen had not a greater regard for their countrymen than ſtrangers could be ſuppoſed to entertain? Would it not therefore be an enterprize of greater difficulty to oppreſs this country through means of the natives, than through that of foreigners?

Foreign troops had never been introduced into the realm without the approbation of Parliament. The Heſſians who came during the rebellion in the late King's reign, and thoſe who were here in the late war, were called in under that ſanction; the firſt time by an addreſs from both Houſes to the Crown; the ſecond, in virtue of a treaty approved in Parliament.

The jealouſy of the nation reſpecting the admittance of foreign troops, was a circumſtance well known, and duly attended to by all who valued its regard. During the triumphant adminiſtration of the Earl of Chatham, notwithſtanding the conſtant and numerous levies of men made at home, and the neceſſity of finding recruits for the many branches of ſervice, during that glorious and extenſive war, yet ſo cautious was he of giving the leaſt opening for animadverſion, that before he would venture to

raiſe,

raiſe a regiment of Germans to be ſtationed in America, he carefully procured an act of Parliament for that purpoſe. In the arrangement of this matter, ſuch deference was ſhown to received ideas, that only one third part of the officers were foreigners, and the common men were all Proteſtants: they were to ſerve in America only, and the higheſt commiſſioned officer to be a Lieutenant Colonel. This was a ſpecimen of vigilance and cautiouſneſs in tranſactions of this kind, which miniſters ought never to forget.

Even ſo lately as the year ſixty-eight, upon the Iriſh Eſtabliſhment being augmented from twelve to fifteen thouſand men, the Crown, though in conjunction with the Iriſh Parliament, did not think proper to carry that meaſure into execution, without the formal concurrence of that of Great Britain.

So jealous were the Engliſh in this particular, that the very Prince to whom they owed the revolution, notwithſtanding all his great and heroic qualities, could not obtain their conſent to permit one ſingle regiment of foreigners to remain in this country. They inſiſted, againſt his repeated entreaties for their ſtay, that he ſhould diſmiſs his favourite corps of Dutch guards, the companions of his many wars, and of his expedition into England, to reſcue it from arbitrary power. Thoſe who refuſed him a requeſt ſeemingly ſo reaſonable, and which no Prince could have demanded with better grace, knew the conſequence of ſuch a precedent, and had the firmneſs not to grant it.

Such were the principal arguments in the Houſe of Lords, for and againſt the legality of introducing foreign forces into the kingdom or its dependencies, without conſent of Parliament. As an act of indemnity would have been a recognizance of its illegality, it was ſtudiouſly warded off, as well as the motion

tion itſelf; which was defeated by the previous queſtion. This was carried by a majority of ſeventy-five to thirty-two.

In the Houſe of Commons, the debates on this important ſubject were no leſs warm and elaborate, and conſiſted of much the ſame reaſonings. A motion was made to the like purpoſe as in the Houſe of Lords; but it was loſt in a ſimilar manner; eighty-one voted for, and two hundred and three againſt it.

In this manner was a queſtion, of which the magnitude is equal to that of any other fundamental point in the conſtitution, put off to future deciſion. While it was in agitation, an incomparable majority of the public agreed in the opinion adopted by the members in the oppoſition. However they might differ concerning the meaſures proper to be adopted reſpecting America, they cordially united with them in reprobating the admiſſion of foreign troops into the kingdom, or its dependencies, without expreſs aſſent of Parliament.

In the midſt of theſe, and ſome other debates of a like nature, miniſtry was employing its attention upon the meaſures that were to be proſecuted in America. The informations coming from that quarter, repreſented the ſtrength of the Americans as increaſing daily, and the determination of the people to be univerſally fixed on the moſt obſtinate defence. Their preparations were carried on with unremitting ardour, both by ſea and land; and they made no doubt of being able, in the courſe of the next year, to moleſt the Britiſh trade in ſuch a manner, as would very ſeriouſly affect the mercantile intereſt. They had begun, at the ſame time, to form connexions with foreign countries and nations; and hoped, in a ſhort time, to place this new correſpondence on ſuch a footing, as to draw from them all thoſe ſupplies from which they were now

now debarred by the interruption of their trade with Britain.

As the deſigns of the Americans were no ſecret, it was propoſed by the Admiralty, in a Committee of Supply, that the naval eſtabliſhment of ſailors and marines, for the enſuing year, ſhould be augmented to twenty-eight thouſand men, and the number of ſhips of war on the American ſtation ſhould amount to eighty. The land forces were to conſiſt of twenty-five thouſand of the ſelecteſt troops in the ſervice.

Theſe formidable preparations called up the attention of ſeveral of the principal members in the oppoſition. In order, if it were ſtill poſſible, to render the operations of war unneceſſary, it was propoſed to enlarge and facilitate the means of reconciliation. To this purpoſe a motion was made by one of them, for an addreſs to the King, that the commiſſioners appointed to act in America, for the purpoſes held out in the ſpeech, ſhould be authoriſed to receive propoſals for conciliation, from any General Convention, Congreſs, or other collective body, that ſhould be found to convey the ſentiments of one or more of the Continental Colonies, ſuſpending all inquiry into the legal or illegal forms, under which ſuch Colonies might be diſpoſed to treat. A condeſcendence of this nature was repreſented as an inducement to the Americans to enter into treaty, and to make conceſſion on their part. This might prevent the effuſion of blood which was otherwiſe ſo near at hand, and would, in all likelihood, lead to an accommodation that would reconcile the honour and permanent intereſt of Great Britain with the requiſitions of the Colonies.

It was urged in ſupport of this motion, that the Engliſh hiſtory furniſhed variety of precedents in favour of ſuch a condeſcenſion from the Crown.

Kings

Kings had often treated with conventions of the people aſſembled without any of the legal forms. They were too wiſe not to know, that ſubſtantial power ſupercedes all formalities, and that when the public feels its own ſtrength, it is prudent to acknowledge it. The nation had more than once in this conſciouſneſs of its power, diſpoſed of the Crown itſelf; and Kings, by receiving it at their hands, had acknowledged their right to beſtow it in this manner. To go no further back, the revolution was a conſpicuous illuſtration of what had been aſſerted. It was a popular convention that placed the Crown of this kingdom on the heads of William and Mary.

The inference from the many precedents of this kind, that might be quoted from the hiſtories of all nations, was, that neither King nor Parliament would ſuffer any degradation, by treating with the conventions popularly choſen in America, whatever denomination they aſſumed, or by whatever methods they were elected. The neceſſity of the times was the ſtrongeſt of all reaſons of ſtate; and it militated ſo powerfully at preſent for ſuch condeſcendance, that nothing could exceed the raſhneſs of inſiſting on a regular courſe of proceeding, in the midſt of ſo violent a fermentation as that which involved the whole Britiſh empire. The moſt powerful Princes had yielded to the preſſure of circumſtances. The proudeſt monarch in his day, Lewis the Fourteenth, ſubmitted to the mortification of ſigning a treaty with his rebellious ſubjects in the Cevennes. Theſe reſolute mountaineers, though but a handful, maintained their ground with ſuch invincible courage and conduct, that two of the beſt generals in Europe were not able to ſubdue them: theſe were Marſhals Berwick and Villars, who, after many fruitleſs endeavours to overcome them, were compelled at laſt to enter into a negotiation with their

principal

principal leader, a man of low extraction, but of unconquerable ſpirit, and abilities ſufficient to engage the French miniſtry to grant him and his party reaſonable terms, ſooner than continue to be haraſſed by an internal enemy.

Examples of this ſort, abundance of which could be cited, ſhould induce people to relax of their ſtrict rights, ſooner than expoſe themſelves to ruin. True policy conſiſted in accommodating oneſelf to exigencies, and difficulties were often made inſurmountable through want of pliancy.

But the temper of the times fruſtrated this attempt. A pacification, it was ſaid, was highly deſirable; but a line was now drawn, beyond which government had decreed not to advance. The Congreſs knew this determination, and had adopted one ſimilar. Were the motion to be carried, it would amount to an acknowledgment of the Congreſs being a legal aſſembly, which was at preſent one of the chief points in debate. Such a condeſcenſion would eſtabliſh the validity of all that body's proceedings, and incline people to decide the whole conteſt in its favour: the juſtice and politics of Great Britain would be equally arraigned; and further conceſſions would of courſe be expected. It would be more prudent, therefore, to ſeek ſome method, leſs liable to ſuch weighty objections. Time and circumſpection might produce one preferable to the preſent, which was of a nature that would admit of being poſtponed, till all others had been tried.

This peremptory refuſal highly exaſperated oppoſition. It was ſtrongly urged, that circumſtances did not correſpond with ſo much inflexibility. Notwithſtanding the vaunts of miniſtry, the formidable army that was to conquer America, ſubſiſted yet but in contemplation. Fifty-five thouſand men compoſed the eſtabliſhment of the enſuing

year; but they were chiefly drawn up upon paper. Hardly any of the corps to be raiſed, had attained their due complement. The miniſterial arrangements did not agree with the national diſpoſition; no means had been left untried to remedy this defect; but it was radical, and admitted of none but a total change of temper and inclination in the bulk of the people. It was in vain that bounties had been raiſed, and the uſual ſtandard lowered, in order to facilitate the levies. Men would not come in upon any encouragement. Neither Proteſtants nor Catholics could be prevailed upon to enliſt for the American ſervice; and the recruiting officers declared, that they had never before met with ſo many mortifications in this branch of military buſineſs.

It was now become a general obſervation, that the lower claſſes had conceived an abſolute averſeneſs to the American war. Upon former occaſions they would croud into the ſervice, and the enliſting parties had their choice of fit and able men; but now even the commoneſt individuals would expoſtulate upon the iniquity of ſhedding the blood of their fellow ſubjects in America. "Were it to fight againſt the French or Spaniards," to uſe their own words, "men enough would be found; but it is hard to take away the lives of our own countrymen."

The miniſterial ſide replied to theſe objections, by obſerving, that the backwardneſs alluded to proceeded from natural and obvious cauſes; ſuch as the more eligible ſituations in life of the common people in this country, which led them to ſlight the military profeſſion. It was alſo an unanſwerable proof of the flouriſhing ſtate of the trade and manufactures throughout the kingdom. Thus, notwithſtanding it occaſioned a deficiency of hands for military purpoſes, it argued an internal ſtrength and proſ-

petity

perity of much more importance, as it ſhewed the ability of this nation to ſupport the expences of any war; which was a more deſirable circumſtance than that affluence of volunteers ſo much boaſted, and which often proved no more than a ſlackneſs in buſineſs, and want of occupation.

A former ſtricture on the conduct of miniſtry was renewed upon this occaſion. An army of twenty-five thouſand men had been announced to the public, as the force intended to be employed againſt America; but this was repreſented as wholly inadequate to the purpoſe of ſubduing it. The Coloniſts were not in the caſe of a foreign nation, whoſe independence and ſovereignty had long been acknowledged, and with whom war is waged merely to obtain a favourable ſettlement of ſome points in litigation. They were a people whom we called our ſubjects, and whoſe obedience to us we were determined to compaſs by force of arms. They, on the other hand, acknowledged only a conditional ſubjection; and were as reſolute in maintaining their determination, as we were in aſſerting ours. The ſtrife was therefore for abſolute dominion over them; a ſpecies of government, rather than ſubmit to which, they had reſolved to undergo any diſtreſs and extremity. Actuated by this reſolution, the whole continent had in a manner taken up arms. Whoever was fit for a ſoldier, was become one. This rendered their military force extremely numerous, as all occupations were ſuſpended for the proſecution of war, which was now the ſole idea that employed their attention.

In ſuch critical circumſtances, deciſive meaſures were indiſpenſible. Nothing ſhould be done by halves: it was by acting in this ineffectual, imprudent manner, that the laſt campaign had proved ſo unſucceſsful. A repetition of this ill ſucceſs would neceſſarily follow the ſame conduct that produced

it. Miniſtry might, and would probably blame Generals, for not ſending them more acceptable accounts of their proceedings; but Generals, however brave and experienced, could not counteract the courſe of natural cauſes. If the bodies under their command were not of ſufficient ſtrength, they could not perform the ſervices entruſted to their execution. Their own ſkill would be of no uſe, the valour of their men fruitleſs, and the money of the nation would be thrown away.

Such was the opinion of ſome of the beſt officers in the Britiſh ſervice; men who had long made part of adminiſtration, and who did not ſtill ſcruple to declare their opinion in the moſt explicit terms. Sentiments of this kind, expreſſed without reſervation, ought to have due weight at the preſent ſeaſon, when the commiſſion of any further miſtakes of this ſort, might involve our affairs on the American continent in irretrievable perplexity.

War and pacification did not in the preſent moment agree. We ſhould make a deciſive option of one, and purſue that only. The interference of the other would defeat it, by which means neither would be carried on in a proper manner. If war was the meaſure embraced, let it be waged with prudence as well as with ſpirit; let ſuch a force be ſent as would, by its formidableneſs, aſcertain ſucceſs, and *cruſh at once* all reſiſtance. No treaty, no ſtipulations ſhould enter into ſuch a ſyſtem. Submiſſion ſhould be commanded, and the terms preſcribed, without ſuffering a negotiation to be mentioned.

If, on the contrary, peace is the object propoſed and really deſired, ſuſpend all theſe formidable and expenſive preparations; declare, in the plaineſt and moſt intelligible terms, the conditions on which you are willing to be reconciled: let this declaration be irrevocable; and then wait an acceptance or

denial,

denial, before your ultimate deciſion, either to proceed to hoſtilities, or to diſarm.

But this propoſal was oppoſed as too peremptory. The force by ſea and land deſigned for America, would be fully adequate to hold out at once both war and conciliation. When the Coloniſts beheld the ſword in one hand, and the moſt friendly proffers in the other; when they ſaw the terrible trial they muſt undergo, and reflected on the equitableneſs of the demands made by this country, ſelf-preſervation, and their own clear intereſt, would prevail over all ſentiments of inveteracy, and influence them not to refuſe what they muſt perceive they would at laſt be glad not to have denied at firſt.

The idea of a conqueſt of America, was by no means cheriſhed. This included a chain of calamitous conſequences, which it was the ſincere deſire of miniſtry to avoid. The intent of Britain could not be to ruin the Coloniſts, but to reclaim them from their obſtinacy. This indeed was ſo inflexible, that nothing ſhort of coercion could effect it. For this reaſon, every preparation had been made that was neceſſary to ſtrike terror; but if this was not produced, and force muſt be uſed, ſtill it would be carried no farther than was abſolutely requiſite, and every blow that was ſtruck would be accompanied with offers of reconciliation.

In anſwer to theſe ideas, it was urged, that reconciliation was well underſtood to be at an immenſe diſtance; and that when it came, it would arrive, in all probability, on the point of the ſword. He that had the longeſt, would dictate the terms of pacification in America. It was in vain to flatter ourſelves the Americans would ſubmit to the deſires of Britain at the preſent; they were fluſhed with the fortunate accidents of laſt campaign, and did not

look upon the Britiſh troops with any dread. It would be a deed of neceſſity to convince them by experience of their ſuperiority, otherwiſe they would remain as refractory as ever, and their preſumption would never permit them to ſubſcribe to any treaty of which they were not the framers.

Matters were now brought to a criſis of deciſion; the buſineſs was begun, and it would be no leſs diſgraceful than imprudent to put it off. Britain was in the ſituation of a warrior, who having buckled on his armour, and girded on his ſword, ſhould heſitate to draw it. Such a ſtate of ſuſpence would embolden the Americans; it would increaſe their ardour, and their endeavours to be prepared to meet us in the field.

The concluding reply to theſe animadverſions was, that a conſtitutional dependence was the only demand of Great Britain upon her Colonies: that ſhe had taken up arms to enforce this, and meant to uſe them for no other purpoſe. While ſhe pretended to no more, the Colonies having no motives of terror in ſuch claims, would not oppoſe them with ſuch deciſiveneſs and violence, as they would moſt certainly an avowal to reduce them to the condition of a conquered people. It was much wiſer, therefore, to hold up conſtantly to their view, an invitation to be reconciled, upon ſuch conditions as would preſerve all their rights untouched, than to ruſh at once into extremities, and profeſs a determination to give them no opportunity of ſtipulating for themſelves.

As conciliatory terms had been propoſed, theſe would be adhered to; and the Americans knowing on what they had to depend, would have neither motive to induce them, or pretence to plead for plunging themſelves into further difficulties, in order to avoid the reſentment of an unmerciful conqueror. As Britain

diſclaimed this title, and acted in no other light than that of an acknowledged ſuperior demanding his lawful due, the feelings of the Americans would not be inſulted in the manner they muſt be, were the haughty threats and ſupercilious airs of a deſpotic oppreſſor to be aſſumed: theſe indeed would not only render them deſperate, but juſtify their reſiſtance, both of which it was equally the duty and the deſire of miniſtry to prevent.

CHAP. XVIII.

Tranſactions in Great Britain relating to America.

1775.

DURING theſe Parliamentary tranſactions, the laſt petition from Congreſs having lain dormant awhile, though far from being forgotten, was at length brought into notice and diſcuſſion.

It had been tranſiently mentioned ſeveral times in debate, and repreſented by oppoſition as a ground of conciliation, on which Great Britain and America might have met to their mutual advantage. The Miniſtry underwent, of courſe, ſevere reproaches for having neglected this, and other applications of the like nature.

A copy of the petition having however been laid before the Houſe of Lords, it was moved by a nobleman in the oppoſition, that Mr. Penn, who had brought it from America, ſhould be examined at the bar of the Houſe. A variety of reaſons were alledged for this motion. He was a gentleman of great rank and fortune, and had been Governor of Pennſylvania, now become the centre, as it were, of American ſovereignty and politics. He was perſonally acquainted with moſt of the members of Congreſs. As he had long reſided in the city where they aſſembled and held their deliberations, his ſtation, family connections, and perſonal character, opened to him ſuch avenues to the moſt uſeful and authentic information, as few other individuals could command. It was not doubted, therefore, but that much important intelligence would be obtained through his means, eſpecially concerning the temper and inclinations of the people, a ſubject

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that had been liable to many contradictory repreſentations. As he was at the ſame time a man of acknowledged diſcernment, a juſt dependence might be placed on his report; and poſſeſſing ſo extenſive a property in America, he could not be ſuſpected of partiality to the cauſe of independency, the eſtabliſhment of which would probably affect the fortune of his family; and, at all events, deprive it of the great powers and prerogatives with which it had been ſo long inveſted.

It appeared from this gentleman's teſtimony, that the charge of aiming at independency, ſo poſitively imputed to Congreſs, was ill founded. The members of that Aſſembly had been fairly elected, and were men of character and abilities; they had acted conformably to the ſenſe of their conſtituents; the Colonies had the higheſt confidence in their integrity, and were entirely governed by their deciſions. The determination to reſiſt Great Britain was unanimous, as well as the perſuaſion that they were fully able to defend themſelves againſt any aggreſſor.

The population of Pennſylvania was ſo much increaſed of late years, that it now afforded a militia of ſixty thouſand men. No leſs than twenty thouſand of theſe had enrolled themſelves to ſerve without pay, and had armed and embodied themſelves before his departure. This body of volunteers included the moſt reputable people in the Province, and conſiſted chiefly of individuals poſſeſſed of property. They had, in imitation of the Colony of Maſſachuſet, inſtituted a body of minute-men, amounting to five thouſand. They had, in great abundance, materials for iron cannon; they had already caſt braſs ordnance at Philadelphia; and fabricated ſmall-arms in great plenty and perfection.

Notwithſtanding the unfavourable reception of their former petitions, Congreſs had formed the moſt hopeful expectations of that which he brought

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over. So ſanguine was the public idea of its being ſucceſsful, that it had been ſtiled the olive branch, and his friends had complimented him upon his being the bearer.

He was, however, very apprehenſive, that the diſappointment they would feel on receiving intelligence of its treatment in England, would be productive of the moſt fatal effects. When they found that conciliatory meaſures had been laid aſide here, and that coercion was reſolved upon, they would reſume their ideas of reſiſtance, and give over all thoughts of reconciliation. In this caſe, he doubted not they would form connections with foreign powers.

He repreſented the inclinations of the Americans as peaceable and friendly in the ſincereſt degree, provided thoſe claims were allowed them on which they had ſo uniformly inſiſted. They bore the higheſt reſpect to Congreſs, but were not the leſs deſirous of reconciliation with Great Britain. Congreſs itſelf had determined to throw no bars in the way to pacification, and to ſubmit to all the former regulations enacted previous to the preſent diſturbances.

So truly were the Americans ſatisfied with their ſubordinate condition, that they commemorated annually the day whereon tranquility was reſtored to their country, and harmony between Great Britain and America, by the repeal of the ſtamp act. Had not thoſe acts taken place ſince that period, which were ſo obnoxious, and gave them ſo much offence, all paſt diſſentions would have been buried in oblivion, and the ſame cordiality and attachment to this country would have ſubſiſted as heretofore.

In conſequence of this examination, it was moved, that the petition from the Continental Congreſs to the King, was ground for a conciliation of the

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unhappy differences ſubſiſting between Great Britain and America. The neceſſity of an immediate ceſſation of this fatal diſpute was ſtated in various points of view; the blood that would be ſhed in America, the diſtreſs that would enſue in Great Britain, and the advantages that would accrue to our enemies, were enlarged upon with great energy.

After repreſenting the innumerable difficulties that muſt attend the carrying on of a war on the American continent, the uncertainty of ſucceſs, on the one hand, and the certainty of the expence and loſs of men on the other, the ſupporters of this motion adverted to the numberleſs advantages that would immediately follow from the reſtoration of peace and mutual amity. They congratulated the public on the auſpicious opportunity afforded by the petition, of removing at once every neceſſity of recurring to odious meaſures to enforce the authority of the ſtate. Fortune ſeemed willing to ſooth, as it were, the national pride of this country, by inclining the Coloniſts to lay an humble petition at its feet, imploring it to grant them peace and friendſhip. Great Britain might now, without derogating from its dignity, conſent to treat with America.

The queſtion to be decided between Great Britain and America was now become very ſimple and clear. —What did Britain claim?—What would America grant? What could the former in juſtice demand, but the ſame ſuperintending and ſovereign power which ſhe had always exerciſed, and which had never been denied her, in the regulation of the commerce, and of the external concerns of America? Provided the Colonies were placed on the ſame footing in thoſe reſpects, on which they ſtood at the concluſion of the laſt war, they would chearfully return to their union with Great Britain, and to the ſame dependence they had always profeſſed.

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In this light the petition opened the wideſt door to reconciliation. Its very expreſſions breathed the warmeſt deſire of renewing all former attachments. The Coloniſts particularly declared, that they deſired no conceſſion to be made derogatory to the honour of the parent ſtate. They beſought the King to recall his troops, by which they meant no more than a ſuſpenſion of arms. The only preliminary requeſted by them was to repeal thoſe acts that moſt oppreſſed them, which were thoſe by which they were deprived of their charters, their fiſheries, and their trade.

A repeal of the obnoxious parts of the regulations made reſpecting America, ſince the year ſixty-three, the period at which they fixed the commencement of their grievances, would be no leſs conducive to the intereſt of Britain, than conſiſtent with juſtice, and with the wiſhes of the Americans.

When they beheld that benevolence reſtored to them which they had been uſed to experience in happier times, and a ſincere readineſs to eaſe them of every burthen of which they had ſo long complained, they would repay this country with every conceſſion it could reaſonably deſire. The firſt ſtep was to meet them on the ground propoſed by their petition. This would ſmoothen at once the path to an entire reconciliation, by convincing them that we were no leſs earneſt than themſelves, in our endeavours to reſtore mutual peace and amity.

It was anſwered, on the other ſide, that it was utterly incompatible with the right of ſovereignty to receive the petition on which the preſent motion was grounded. That very reception would be a relinquiſhment of ſuch claim. To treat with an illegal aſſembly of men, avowing and juſtifying their reſiſtance, would be to acknowledge, not only virtually, but formally, that they were the proper deputies of the people of whom they aſſumed the repreſentation.

preſentation. While they pretended to be ſubjects, they could not meet in any other form than that preſcribed by the conſtitution.

But the reality was, that whatever their pretences might be, their behaviour was the reverſe of obedience and loyalty. While acknowledging the right of ſupremacy and controul in the Britiſh legiſlature, they contradicted it in the moſt effectual manner in all their actions, by declaring againſt the exerciſe of it, whenever it oppoſed their factious deſigns. They refuſed to admit the declaratory act, thoſe for quartering ſoldiers, and eſtabliſhing courts of admiralty. They rejected, in ſhort, every regulation they diſliked, and yet inſiſted on their acknowledging the legiſlative ſuperintendency of Great Britain. What was ſuch a conduct, but an affront to the underſtanding of the Britiſh government?

This conduct of the Americans appeared ſo full of duplicity and prevarication to ſome members of the Houſe, that they repreſented the petition as a baſe attempt to impoſe upon the King and Parliament. Covering its intent with ſpecious proteſtations of loyalty on the one hand, the Congreſs had, on the other, filled its appeals to the Britiſh and Iriſh nation with malicious and falſe inſinuations againſt the government of this country. They loaded the Parliament with abuſe, denied its lawful authority, and manifeſtly ſtrove to ſow diſſention in both kingdoms, and to involve them in reciprocal bloodſhed, by inviting the people to unite in eſpouſing their cauſe, and in reſiſting the authority of the ſtate.

With men whoſe behaviour was ſo inſidious, it was imprudent to hold a friendly communication. As they had acted the part of traitors, they ought to be treated as ſuch. It were weakneſs in the extreme to diſſemble the reſentment which could not

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fail being excited by ſuch odious proceedings, and which called for chaſtiſement without further delay.

After a long and violent debate, the motion in favour of the petition was at laſt rejected, by a diviſion of eighty-ſix, againſt thirty-three.

While this conteſt employed the Upper Houſe, the Lower was filled with no leſs altercation in conſequence of the demands for the ſupplies on account of the American War. The land-tax was now to be raiſed to four ſhillings in the pound.—This augmentation occaſioned the country gentlemen to turn their attention to an object that concerned them in a more particular manner than any other denomination of ſubjects.

They had ſupported the coercive meaſures againſt the Colonies, in conſtant expectation that a revenue would ariſe from thence, to leſſen the weight of the heavy burthens with which this country was loaded. Actuated by this hope, they were willing to advance money while they had a proſpect of being relieved from exactions in future, by the contributions which were to be drawn from America.

It was therefore with no ſmall ſurprize and concern, that they obſerved, by the language of miniſtry, that the idea of taxation was in a manner abandoned as inexpedient, or impracticable. They declared, in conſequence, that if that eſſential object was relinquiſhed, they ſhould alſo recede from their intention of granting money for the proſecution of a conteſt, from which no ſubſtantial benefits were to be derived; and which was attended with an expence, which nothing but the well-founded expectation of large pecuniary emoluments to come could encourage them to ſupport. Unleſs, therefore, ſuch were the motives in view, they could not, conſiſtently with the public intereſt, conſent to the increaſe of the land tax.

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These discontents of the landed gentlemen were a serious alarm to ministry. The only method of pacifying them, was a solemn assurance that the intention of obtaining a revenue from America had never been dropped. Whatever language might have been held on this subject, no more was meant, than that in times of so much trouble and confusion, it was not advisable to mix that with other causes of dissention and clamour in the Colonies; but though abandoned for the present, the idea fully subsisted in prospect.

The dispute with America was become more serious, and of more importance than it was originally. The supremacy of the parent state was now called in question: until this great object was ascertained, all other considerations must remain unsettled; but as soon as this was happily terminated, the business of taxation should be regularly resumed, as a measure which could not be dispensed with, and without which the settlement of the claims of this country would be deficient and incomplete.

This explanatory answer having tranquilised the minds of the country gentlemen, the land tax was fixed at four shillings in the pound, by a majority of one hundred and eighty-two against forty-seven.

The rapidity with which ministry carried all the measures it proposed, did not, however, discourage opposition from making another effort to bring about an accommodation between Great Britain and its Colonies. The same gentleman who, during the sessions of the preceding year, had so vigorously, though ineffectually, introduced a conciliatory proposal, resolved again to make a similar attempt.

The motion to this purpose was prefaced by a petition from the principal cloathing towns in the county of Wilts. The intent of the petition was to counteract another, which had been procured for a contradictory purpose, and to prevent, in the

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petitioner's words, the dreadful effects which might ariſe from ſuch miſrepreſentation being conveyed to Parliament. It deprecated, in the moſt feeling and ſolemn manner, the miſeries of a civil war, and entreated the Houſe to adopt ſuch meaſures, as might reſtore the affectionate intercourſe between England and the Colonies.

Mr. Burke, the mover of this conciliatory bill, exerted himſelf on this occaſion with his uſual ingenuity and eloquence; and left no argument unemployed, of which the ſubject would admit.

He repreſented, with great force of language, the violent temper of the times, and the imputation of want of zeal and patriotiſm, which thoſe men lay under, who recommended lenity, and endeavoured to avert, by peaceable meaſures, the ruinous conſequences of an oppoſite conduct.

Three different plans, he obſerved, were now in contemplation for terminating the preſent diſturbances. The firſt was, war and conqueſt; the ſecond, war accompanied with treaty; the third, peace and conceſſion. He examined the means by which the war was to be carried on in America the next campaign, and repreſented them as inadequate to the end propoſed. He reprobated the idea of having recourſe to plunder and deſolation, in order to compel the enemy to ſubmit. This, he ſaid, would irritate, but never conquer: it would produce hatred and animoſity; but never had, nor ever could induce a people to become ſubjects to another.

He aſſerted, that there was no probability of ſucceſs in the various arrangements that were propoſed. They had received the ſanction of no proper authority: no military or naval officer had given an opinion in their favour; and ſeveral of the moſt eminent in both departments, had diſapproved of them. As no man of military experience would vouch for

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the ſufficiency of the force, none of thoſe who were commiſſioned to furniſh it with ſupplies, would anſwer for its ſubſiſtence from the moment it left the ſea coaſt. This would effectually prevent its operations.

He next adverted to the mixture of war and treaty; and condemned it as tending to fruitleſs delays, and productive of nothing certain and concluſive. It were nugatory to ſend out pardons to people who had neither applied for, nor would accept of them. Did miniſtry imagine that nothing was wanting but an amneſty to reſtore peace in America?

He reprobated, with great ſeverity, the diſcretionary power veſted in Commiſſioners, of granting general, or particular pardons, in ſuch manner, and to ſuch perſons only, as they ſhould think proper, without any direction for their government, on the one hand, or conditions ſpecified as neceſſary to be obſerved on the other.

After repreſenting the preceding ſyſtems as inefficacious, he brought forwards the plan he had framed upon this occaſion; and which was founded upon the idea of conceſſion previous to treaty: he inſiſted upon the immediate neceſſity of making conceſſions: the ſooner they were made, the better grace would accompany them. Such a meaſure would obviate the tedioufneſs incident to treaties, would be more conſiſtent with the dignity of Parliament, and conciliate the Colonies much ſooner than conceſſions ariſing from ſtipulations.

The firſt object in view, ought to be to regain the confidence of the Coloniſts, which had been utterly loſt by the conduct obſerved towards them during the laſt ten years. Parliamentary interpoſition could alone reſtore it, by becoming ſecurity for government, and ſettling matters on a conſtitutional foundation.

The right of taxation having occaſioned the preſent diſpute, it was a concern to be adjuſted previouſly to all others. In order to have a clear perception of the true relation, which the Britiſh Parliament bore to the Colonies, he obſerved that it ought to be conſidered not as the repreſentative, but as the ſovereign of America. In this light taxation was no part of ſovereignty; but ought to be exerciſed ſolely by the authority of thoſe who are to be taxed, in the ſame manner as the people of England authoriſe their repreſentatives in Parliament.

He preſſed, in the moſt urgent manner, the neceſſity of relinquiſhing entirely the claim of taxation; which, indeed, was no longer tenable in the circumſtances this country had been placed by the injudiciouſneſs of people in power. There was no *diſhonour*, however, in any ſort of ſettlement of domeſtic quarrels. Engliſhmen ſhould not ſtand upon punctilios among themſelves; and would incur leſs diſgrace by yielding an hundred points to each other, in order to procure a termination of their inteſtine feuds, than by giving up a ſingle point to a foreign enemy. But unleſs due conceſſions were made in time to our people in the Colonies, of our own accord, there was much danger that we ſhould make them at laſt through compulſion.

The bill he had framed for the purpoſe of conciliation, was upon the model of the famous ſtatute made in the thirty-fifth year of Edward the Firſt, by which the Crown renounced the taxing of the ſubject without conſent of Parliament. He ſhowed the reſemblance of the diſputes between king and people about taxation at that time, to thoſe that ſubſiſted at preſent between the Britiſh Parliament and the Colonies. The claims of the Crown then, were the ſame as thoſe of Parliament now, and the complaints remedied by that ſtatute, ſimilar to

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thoſe which the preſent bill was intended to remove.

Here, therefore, was a precedent of the higheſt authority, to guide men in the labyrinth wherein they were ſo unhappily involved. The Crown had been, antecedently to that ſtatute, in the practice of levying money upon the people, by its ſole authority; and vindicated it by the ſame reaſons now alledged by Parliament in ſupport of the like claim over America. The King, it was then argued, being charged with the protection of the realm, muſt of courſe be provided with the means requiſite for that purpoſe; and it would be inconſiſtent to commit the firſt to his care, without truſting him alſo with the ſecond. Upon this ground the right of taxation was maintained as inherent in the Crown. But with all theſe claims and reaſonings on his ſide, this power of taxing was explicitly and ſolemnly given up by as great and wiſe a monarch as ever ſat on the Engliſh throne.

It was very remarkable that this ſtatute contained nothing tending in anywiſe to affect the royal prerogative in other matters. The preſervation of its other branches was owing, probably, to the ſurrender of this obnoxious one. The bill in queſtion was perfectly conformable to the ſpirit of that ſtatute. Great Britain ſtood in the place of the crown; America in that of the ſubject. The circumſtances attending the relation in both inſtances, were ſufficiently alike to juſtify his making the one a precedent for the other in the caſe of taxation.

He then enumerated the particulars of the bill; which were a renunciation of the exerciſe of taxation, without entering into the queſtion of right. A reſervation of the power of levying duties for the regulation of commerce; but the money ſo raiſed

Crown to call a General Meeting, or Congreſs of the Colonies, whenever it was judged expedient. The acts of which were to be binding upon all. The duties laid on them in the year ſixty-ſeven, with the late coercive and penal laws, were to be repealed. An act of amneſty was to paſs on their laying down their arms within a certain time. All revenue in future was to conſiſt of free gifts, as in England.

The objections to this bill were, that it gave too much away from Great Britain, and yet too little to ſatisfy the Colonies. Their claims included not only the reſcinding of the declaratory act, and the others paſſed ſince the year ſixty-three, but all the revenue laws made from the time when the act of Trade was paſſed, to the preſent period. They objected to all regulations for the expreſs purpoſe of revenue; but the bill extended no further back than the year ſixty-ſeven. To coincide fully with the demands of America, it ought to have reached as far as the ſeventy-ſecond year of the laſt century. Neither did the bill give them relief in the caſe of Admiralty Courts, of which they ſo much complained; and which, though altered in ſome of their forms, were as old as the act of Navigation itſelf. The bill, in order to be complete, ſhould ſatisfy them in that, and in all other matters which they conſidered as grievances.

The bill did not beſtow liberally enough with one hand, and laviſhed too much with the other, by giving up rights which had never been queſtioned until the preſent conteſt. It aſſigned the duties to be collected for the regulation of commerce, to the diſpoſal of the reſpective Aſſemblies, as if levied by their authority: this was, in a manner, acknowledging that Parliament had improperly interfered in diſpoſing of their revenue, and was a virtual repeal of every ſtatute for its diſpoſal, made ſince the act of Trade.

It was inſiſted upon, at the ſame time, that as a plan of accommodation had been marked out in the ſpeech from the Throne, it would be diſreſpectful to the Crown, and tend to diminiſh the confidence of Parliament in the miniſtry that adviſed that plan, to prefer another to it, unleſs it were laid aſide by the ſame authority that framed or recommended it.

Beſides the foregoing arguments, others were alſo alledged, to prove that all endeavours of reconciliation were fruitleſs in the preſent temper of the Americans. Coercion alone was the medium, whereby any uſeful purpoſe could be effected. The repeated propoſals in order to bring about a reſtoration of peace and amity between Great Britain and the Coloniſts, had only hardened theſe, and increaſed their audacity. While they ſaw us perpetually buſied in deviſing ſchemes of this nature, they would moſt certainly conclude that we were conſcious of more internal debility than miniſtry were willing to own, and that unleſs this were the caſe, ſo proud and haughty a people would not be ſo ready to ſtoop to ſo much condeſcenſion.

No debate had for a long time been ſupported with greater energy and vigour. Both parties diſplayed on this occaſion uncommon eloquence and abilities: it did not terminate till four in the morning; when the previous queſtion being put, the motion was negatived by a majority of two hundred and ten, to one hundred and five.

Some days after the rejection of this famous bill, another was brought into Parliament, prohibiting all intercourſe with the Thirteen United Colonies. All American property, at ſea, or in harbour, was declared lawful prize to the officers and companies of the King's veſſels. It empowered the Crown to appoint commiſſioners, with authority to grant pardons to individuals, to inquire into general and particular grievances, to determine whether

part or the whole of a Colony were returned to that ſtate of obedience which entitled them to the King's protection, and to take off the reſtrictions of the bill, as they thought proper.

A bill of this kind, rouſed immediately the utmoſt fury of oppoſition. Were theſe, it was aſked, the terms of reconciliation held out to the Colonies, as an inducement to return to their allegiance? Such a bill was a radical deſtruction of all hopes of accommodation. Britain and America muſt now prepare for abſolute conqueſt, or total independency. We had renounced all government over them, but that of the ſword; and they muſt now ſeek protection from our rage, under the ſhelter of ſome foreign power. Their merchant ſhips would now be converted into privateers; the ſeas would ſwarm with them; and our trade in all parts, eſpecially in the Weſt Indies, would become expoſed to their depredations.

Offers of pardon, and of being reſtored to freedom of trade, were made to a people who ſcorned the one, and had determined to loſe the other, rather than ſubmit to the injunctions laid upon them. But miniſtry ſhould not imagine that the ports of America would remain ſhut; they would be thrown open to all nations; all ſtates and potentates would be invited to eſtabliſh an intercourſe with them:—And would none accept the invitation? Did miniſtry flatter itſelf, that of ſo many ill-wiſhers to Britain, none would beſtir themſelves on this occaſion? No man that was not guilty of wilful ignorance, could harbour a moment's doubt, that this bill would prove a ſignal to all the enemies of Great Britain, to unite their councils and their arms for the furtherance of that ruin into which ſhe was now precipitating herſelf, equally to their ſatisfaction and amazement.

In ſupport of this bill it was alledged, that it had not altered the nature of things. America was already at war with Great Britain, and reſolved to proſecute it by ſea, as well as by land, in the ſame manner as ourſelves. We were compelled by the circumſtances of diſtance and ſituation, to carry on the war on both elements. Were the Americans left the liberty of navigation, they would be ſupplied with thoſe means of defence which it was our intention to intercept, by making capture of their veſſels. The more vigorous and extenſive our operations, the ſooner hoſtilities would be at an end.—Miſtaken lenity would only lengthen the duration of war, and prevent us from improving thoſe opportunities of ſucceſs, which would naturally ariſe from embracing every poſſible means of diſtreſſing the enemy.

The bill was neceſſarily ſevere; otherwiſe it would not anſwer the point propoſed, which was coercion. But its effects would not be felt by ſuch as choſe to avoid them. Whoever ſubmitted, was that inſtant delivered from all apprehenſions on that account. Obedience, or chaſtiſement, were now placed before the Americans for their choice.—Every Colony, and every individual on the continent was invited to peace and reconciliation. All that was requeſted, was an acknowledgment of the ſovereignty of Great Britain, and a proportionable contribution towards the common exigencies of the empire. Let this be granted, and we became their friends and protectors.

Great apprehenſions were pretended for our planters in the Weſt Indies, and our merchants trading thither; but they had little reality, and were principally held out to excite complaints againſt government, and to repreſent miniſtry as guilty of imprudence and mal-adminiſtration. Was it any ways probable, that America, notoriouſly deficient

in ſo many eſſential reſources, without a navy, or a ſingle ſhip of any conſiderable force, her coaſts and ports at the command of our fleets, could face the power of Britain at ſea? Were we wanting in ſhips to defend our trade and poſſeſſions in the Weſt Indies from the attacks of America?

Foreign Princes and nations were brought into the liſt of thoſe apprehenſions that were entertained on our account: but the ſituation of ſuch as were moſt to be guarded againſt, would probably lead them to look with no gracious eye on the conduct of our people in America. They too had Colonies, and would not, from motives of the cleareſt intereſt, rejoice at the revolt of ours. Precedents of this kind were long known to be contagious; it was not therefore from thoſe powers we had malevolent intentions to apprehend.

The eſtabliſhment of an independent empire in America, was, on many accounts, an object of ſerious contemplation to all the European ſtates that had poſſeſſions in that part of the world. How far the conſequences of ſuch a revolution might extend, was a great queſtion among politicians. To ſay nothing of the pernicious example of ſuch a defection from the parent ſtate, the people newly emerged from dependency, would, in all probability, not remain ſatisfied with their new condition. They would, with all that enthuſiaſm which always accompanies freſh acquired liberty, endeavour to extend their power. This would render them very dangerous neighbours, and oblige all people ſituated on their borders, either to harmoniſe with their deſigns, or to oppoſe them with force. If the firſt of theſe happened, it would be hard to tell where this complying diſpoſition would end. In all likelihood, the communication of their freedom would gain them numbers of partiſans, and they would be joined by ſuch multitudes, that nothing but a power-

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ful oppoſition would put a ſtop to their encroachments. This being the caſe, was it not incumbent on thoſe who foreſaw the probability of theſe events, to obviate them by the only effectual method that offered, which was to diſcourage the rebellion broke out in the Colonies belonging to Great Britain, and by no means to moleſt that power while employed in its ſuppreſſion.

Oppoſition having complained, that in its preſent form, the bill was an irreconcileable mixture of war and conciliation: it was anſwered, that there could be no contradiction in holding out threats of war, and offers of peace. It was the uſual ſtile among all powers at variance; they were alternatives indiſpenſibly connected in ſuch caſes. Had nothing been denounced but hoſtilities, then indeed a fair opening would have been given to condemn the miniſterial plan; but as the proffer of peace accompanied the denunciation of war, the laws of honour and of humanity had been equally obſerved, and the bill was unimpeachable in that reſpect.

The clauſe for veſting the property of the ſeizures in the officers and ſhips companies, of the navy, was combated by oppoſition no leſs ſtrenuouſly.—Such a meaſure, it was ſaid, would be highly diſgraceful to the gentlemen in that line of public ſervice. It tended to diveſt them of all ſentiments of honour, and to fill their minds with no other ideas but thoſe of ſpoil and plunder. Such motives were only fit for pirates, and ſhould be carefully prevented from influencing our naval officers. An allurement of this kind, while it corrupted the principles even of the ſuperior claſſes of the navy, would convert the common men into the moſt unfeeling robbers. When once they had been authoriſed and uſed to ſtrip without remorſe their countrymen and fellow-ſubjects, they would loſe that eagerneſs againſt a foreign enemy which had hi-

therto been their peculiar characteriſtic, and which alone ſhould be tolerated in men of ſo daring a diſpoſition. They would become habituated to rapine and to theft, and exerciſe it indiſcriminately on all that came in their way. The extinction of national pride, and patriotic ardour againſt the foes of England, would be the ſure conſequence of ſuch a regulation. When people have once accuſtomed themſelves to be chiefly guided by ſordid views, they quickly forget all others, and are intent upon nothing that does not come recommended in the ſhape of lucre.

Another object of condemnation from the ſame quarter, was the extraordinary power lodged in the diſcretionary management of the commiſſioners.—It was repreſented to be of ſuch a nature, as could not, conſiſtent with the ſpirit of a free government, be truſted to any ſubjects. The conſtitution of this country inveſted the ſovereign with it occaſionally, but his miniſters were reſponſible for his exerciſe of it. Without the ſanction of any precedent for ſo uncommon a deviation from the due forms of law, this bill conferred on the commiſſioners a degree of power which was refuſed to the Crown itſelf.

In the courſe of the various arguments and methods of reaſoning employed againſt this celebrated bill, no few ſarcaſms were thrown out againſt it.—Among others, it was obſerved by one of its ſtaunch-eſt oppoſers, that the guardian genius of America had this day preſided with full influence in the midſt of the Britiſh councils. He had inſpired the meaſures that had been reſolved upon by thoſe who directed the affairs of this country. They were evidently calculated to anſwer all the purpoſes which the moſt violent Americans, and their moſt zealous adherents could propoſe, by inducing the people in our Colonies to unite in the moſt inflexible determination to caſt off all dependence on this govern-

ment, and to eſtabliſh a free and independent ſtate of their own. He therefore moved that the title of the bill ſhould be altered, and worded in ſuch a manner as ſhould expreſs its real intent and meaning; in which caſe he was of opinion, it ſhould be ſtiled a bill for carrying more effectually into execution the reſolves of Congreſs.

After a long and vehement altercation, the motion for the bill was carried, by one hundred and ninety-two votes, againſt ſixty-four.

In the Houſe of Lords, the oppoſition to this bill was no leſs keen and ſevere. Every part of it was adverted to with great ſtrength and freedom of argument and examination. It was reprobated as neither equitable, expedient, or politic. It ranked the Americans among foreign nations, by the hoſtile declarations it contained againſt the people and property of that country. It drew a line of ſeparation between Great Britain and its Colonies, and led the way to that diſmemberment of the empire which people had ſo long apprehended would be the final iſſue of this fatal diſpute. The immenſe ocean that lay between the continent of America and the ſhores of Britain, would now fix at laſt the boundaries of both ſtates; and there would henceforth be two nations of Engliſhmen, the European, and the American.

Theſe were events at which poſterity would be ſtruck with amazement, when they reflected on the obſtinacy of thoſe who brought them about, and the facility with which they might have been prevented. This bill completed the meaſure of that ſeverity which refuſed to liſten to the repreſentations of a people, who perſiſted, in ſpite of ill treatment, to call themſelves the ſubjects of Great Britain; and who implored its clemency to ſuſpend the ſword lifted to ſtrike them, till one more hearing had been granted them. It was a bill framed in

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the hour of fatality to Britain. It created a new country and a new nation; it planted them in that vaſt region where once ſtood the one half of the Britiſh empire; it gave them new inclinations and new intereſts; it taught them to look upon what remained of that empire, as their moſt dangerous and inveterate foe, and to league themſelves with all its enemies.

Among the various clauſes of this bill, none was treated with ſo much acrimony as that by which the people belonging to the American veſſels, when captured, were indiſcriminately compelled, without diſtinction of perſons, to ſerve as common ſailors in the Britiſh ſhips of war. It was deſcribed as an unpardonable exceſs of ſeverity. Such a compulſion upon priſoners, was unprecedented in any caſe of war, or even of rebellion, among civilized nations.

The miniſterial anſwer to theſe, and a multiplicity of other charges, was, that the treaſonable deſigns and proceedings of the Americans were a ſufficient vindication for the contents of this bill. Their own intentions were no leſs inimical towards this country, and they were at this hour deviſing, with equal eagerneſs, at leaſt, in what manner they could moſt effectually diſtreſs this nation, without ſuffering themſelves to be arreſted by any ideas of the calamities our people would endure in conſequence of their meaſures. The war was now become an offenſive one on both ſides; and nothing would betray more weakneſs and imbecility on our part, than to refrain from taking advantage of our enemy, who certainly had ſhown an equal diſpoſition to improve all ſuch as lay within his reach.

It was with great propriety that the bill veſted in the people of the navy, the captures they ſhould make upon the Americans. It would induce that brave and uſeful body of men, to exert themſelves with

with all poſſible activity; and would contribute to annoy the enemy more efficaciouſly than any other expedient.

There was more appearance than reality in the hardſhip ſo much complained of, the compelling American ſailors to ſerve on board our men of war. Was it not much leſs rigorous than to confine them in priſon? They would not fare worſe than our own ſeamen; they would be rated on the ſhip's books, and receive the ſame pay and emoluments as the others; many of whom were preſſed in the ſervice full as much againſt their inclinations.

It was an eaſy matter to aggravate evils by elaborate deſcriptions; but allowing that we were at the eve of much miſchief, Britain had, with undaunted ſpirit, ſubmitted, at various epochas, to great diſtreſſes in ſupport of her intereſt and reputation. True it was, we were engaged in a civil conflict with a people who were a part of ourſelves; but did we mean ſuddenly to come to a retractation of all that we had done, or determined to do upon this occaſion? If ſo, we might ſearch the records of all nations without finding a precedent. But if we ſtill perſiſted in a regular purſuit, of what the conſtitutional wiſdom and authority of the beſt government upon earth, had, after the moſt free and mature deliberation agreed upon, we ſhould, once for all, lay aſide theſe idle diſcuſſions about things the nature of which could not be altered, and which only ſerved to embroil us, and to prevent that union of ſenſe and ſpirit, which would enable us to ſee the folly of being divided amongſt ourſelves, in favour of thoſe who were cloſely united againſt us; and to ſummon that immenſe ſtock of ſtrength and courage, which, if properly directed, and acting with unanimity and fidelity, would triumph over much more formidable enemies than thoſe we had now to encounter.

In the courſe of this famous debate, it was obſerved by a great law lord, that the queſtion of original right or wrong, was not ſo much to be attended to, as the indiſpenſible neceſſity of ſelf-defence: we were now engaged in a war, and muſt exert ourſelves to proſecute it with ſucceſs. The criticalneſs of our circumſtances compelled us to fight. The laconic ſpeech, which a Scotch General in the army of Guſtavus Adolphus made to his ſoldiers on the point of battle, was preciſely applicable to our ſituation. Pointing to the enemy, "See you thoſe men," ſaid he; "kill them, my lads, or they will kill you."

After a conteſtation that laſted till midnight, and was ſupported with remarkable vigour on both ſides, the motion for the commitment of this bill was carried by a diviſion of ſeventy-eight to nineteen.

It was followed by a proteſt of unuſual length, and great energy, wherein it underwent a ſevere ſcrutiny. A minute inveſtigation was made of every obnoxious part, and no cenſures were ſpared of which it was thought deſerving.

Notwithſtanding the diſcouragement which was neceſſarily produced by theſe continual and prodigious majorities in favour of miniſterial meaſures, and the conſtant rejection of every propoſal of a conciliatory tendency, the ſame gentleman who followed Mr. Burke laſt ſeſſion in making an effort of this kind, renewed his attempt in the preſent as he had done.

The plan of accommodation now propoſed by Mr. Hartley, did not much differ from his former, and was framed on the ſame principle. He was of opinion, that the ſentiments of Adminiſtration, and thoſe of the Congreſs were not ſo widely diſtant as was imagined. The former ſeeming to relax conſiderably in the article of taxation, and the latter

The principal parts of his plan, were a ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities; an injunction to the Colonies to eſtabliſh a trial by jury in criminal caſes, in favour of their ſlaves. On their compliance with this, as a teſt of their obedience, all the obnoxius laws relating to them ſince the year ſixty-three, were to be repealed, and an act of general indemnity was to paſs. After this reſtoration of tranquility, letters of requiſition ſhould, as heretofore, be ſent to the different Colonies, for the ſupplies neceſſary for their government and defence.

An anſwer was given to this propoſal, by which it was intimated that all others would be equally fruitleſs. Motions of this kind, it was ſaid, had been frequently made, and the ſubject of them ſufficiently debated. But until the meaſures propoſed from the Throne, had undergone a trial, it would be improper to admit of any others. Theſe motions did not correſpond with the ſenſe of a great majority of the Houſe. There was no certainty that if they were accepted on our part, the Americans would be alſo inclined to accede to them. Sovereignty and taxation went hand in hand; and it ought not to be ſuppoſed, that while this country claimed the firſt, it could conſiſtently relinquiſh the laſt.

While this conciliatory motion was rejected in ſo deciſive a manner, a favourable reception was given to a petition from the Colony of Nova Scotia, preſented in conſequence of the miniſters conciliatory propoſition during the laſt ſeſſion. It was intended by thoſe who had promoted it, to ſerve as a precedent for the other Colonies. It came ſeparately from one, which was the mode recommended by miniſtry: it propoſed to raiſe a revenue in the Colony, under the direction of Parliament. The amount would not have been conſiderable; but it would have eſtabliſhed the right. The petition

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was therefore received by adminiſtration, and a day appointed to take it into conſideration.

The method of granting a revenue propoſed by this Colony, was to pay a certain fixed ſum in the hundred on the importation of foreign goods. By this regulation the revenue would always bear a due proportion to the wealth and conſumption of the Colony. The rate of this duty was to be aſcertained by Parliament, and to remain unalterably fixed: the only regulation to be allowed in ſubſequence, was to make the duty correſpond with the comparative value of money at the time the rates were ſettled.

Oppoſition contended, that the former revenue, which was to ceaſe on the preſent taking place, was much ſuperior to it. That no Province had coſt more to government, nor had produced leſs than Nova Scotia. A diminution of the duties it paid, ought, therefore, by no means to be ſuffered. That the offering of a revenue on the miniſterial plan from ſo inconſiderable a Colony, was hardly worth Parliamentary notice, as it might very juſtly be ſuſpected to proceed from the influence of its military government.

Miniſtry replied, that the ſmallneſs of the ſum to be raiſed was not to be conſidered as an objection. It was to be proportioned to the abilities of the Province, and would increaſe together with them.—That an augmentation on the ſame principle in the other Colonies, would ſoon be productive of a conſiderable revenue: that the example given by this Province was an object of great moment, and ought to be duly encouraged; that the accepting of a moderate income from this Colony, would convince the others that we did not mean to load them with heavy burthens.

For theſe reaſons, a poundage duty of eight in the hundred, was agreed to be laid on all articles

that were not the produce of the Britiſh dominions, either in Europe, or in America, and to be at the diſpoſal of Parliament. On the formal ſettlement of this matter, all other taxes and duties were to ceaſe in that Colony, ſuch only excepted as regulated commerce; the produce of which was to be carried to the account of the Province.

In conſequence of this compliance with the conciliatory propoſal, an admittance into this colony was permitted of ſome foreign goods directly from the place of their growth. This was done with the view of engaging the other Colonies to accede to this propoſal, from a proſpect of the enlargement of their trade. Other arrangements were alſo in contemplation, to bring this buſineſs to ſtability and perfection, as great hopes were formed it would prove a model of future taxation, and an incitement to obedience, by the benefits with which it was accompanied.

Had this tranſaction not happened ſo late, it is not improbable that it would have effectually contributed to a pacification, by leading the way to conformity with the plan propoſed by miniſtry. It was thought by impartial people to be highly beneficial to the Colonies, and yet that it would, in due time, yield abundantly to the parent ſtate.—But the ſpirit of diſcontent and diſſention was grown ſo ſtrong, that no conſiderations whatever were able to reſiſt it. After beſtowing much toil and attention upon this ſubject, the variety of others that aroſe daily, very different from this one, and tending all to defeat the arrangements it had produced; and the difficulties of every denomination that were now preſſing inceſſantly upon the miniſtry, put an entire end to this ſcheme, and to all further expectation of bringing forward any other of the ſame tendency.

But even this compliance of Nova Scotia with the desires of ministry, was attended with circumstances which plainly indicated, the people of that Colony were not free from that disposition to complain, which characterised the whole continent.—The petition they had presented, contained a numerous list of grievances, of which they intreated the redress with no less earnestness, though not so much warmth of expression as marked the remonstrances from the other Colonies. A compliance with the requests of this petition was implied as a condition of that obedience which was expected from them in the present instance, and seemed to be considered by them as necessary to insure a permanent connection, and to retain the affections of the people, which, it was insinuated, depended on this proof of readiness in Parliament to oblige them.—Ministry was also reminded of the customary requisitions made when supplies were wanted from the Colonies. Thus the petition, except in the mention of a stated revenue, differed nothing from those that had been presented from the other Colonies.

The relinquishment of this business was a necessary consequence of the multiplicity of greater objects that now took up the whole time and attention of ministers. Opposition was composed of men of the most eminent abilities, and they were indefatigable in their endeavours to expose the conduct of ministry, and to prove it inconsistent with policy, and totally ruinous to the affairs of the kingdom.

Among the various objects against which they now Feb. 29, levelled their censure, were the treaties under 1776. consideration for hiring foreign auxiliaries, in the prosecution of the war against America.

The Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, the Duke of Brunswick, and other German Princes, had agreed to furnish them. Their total amounted to seventeen thousand men. They were represented as

troops

troops equal to any in Europe for the regularity of their diſcipline. They had ſerved in the laſt general war, and might in every reſpect challenge the appellation of veterans.

The reaſons aſſigned by miniſtry for applying to Germany in the preſent inſtance, was the abſolute impracticability, from ſeveral cauſes, of raiſing a ſufficiency of men within the realm for the purpoſes in agitation. But were this feaſible, ſtill they would be raw and unſkilful, and from their habits of life, unable to undergo the hardſhips of war with the ſame degree of vigour as men inured to military fatigues, and whoſe conſtitutions were hardened by long ſervice.

An additional motive was, that in a commercial country, ſuch as Great Britain, the preſervation of the human ſpecies was more peculiarly to be ſtudied, on account of the infinite variety of ways in which it is continually employed. Commerce and manufactures required a prodigious number of hands, and could not poſſibly ſpare them for the purpoſes of war. It was only in large and populous countries, deſtitute of trade, that ſoldiers could be procured, without detrimenting the ſtate; and it was for that reaſon application was made to the ſovereigns of thoſe countries from which Britain had already been furniſhed with troops on former emergencies. When the war was at an end, they would be diſmiſſed, and the expence would ceaſe; whereas, if the levies were made among us, it would ſtill be neceſſary, on the termination of hoſtilities, to provide for the half-pay of conſiderable numbers.

The treaties for obtaining theſe auxiliaries, had, it was ſaid, been conducted with all the judiciouſneſs and caution that could be uſed in caſes of this difficult nature. The neceſſity of the times was ſuch, that troops muſt be obtained, at whatever price they might coſt. In this reſpect, however, nothing exor-

bitant had been demanded: the terms were the ſame as thoſe upon which we had formerly been furniſhed with troops from the ſame quarter. Thoſe who were competent judges in theſe matters, allowed, that all expences conſidered, theſe foreign forces would coſt the nation leſs than levies made in this country.

Oppoſition, on the other hand, denied the validity of all theſe different aſſertions. The neceſſity pleaded by miniſtry, was founded on their own conduct. They had entangled themſelves in perplexities; and now that the people of this country refuſed to extricate them from the effects of their imprudence, they applied for help to foreigners. Such was the interpretation that Europe would put on the difficulty they acknowledged in procuring aſſiſtance at home. Was it probable that in ſo populous a nation, a few thouſands could not be raiſed throughout the vaſt extent of land it inhabited, without bringing immediate diſtreſs on commerce? The very ſuſpenſion of the trade between Great Britain and the Colonies, would afford a greater number than was now demanded; and all the world knew that a very ſhort ſpace of time would be required to train them ſufficiently to face people who were no more veterans than themſelves. But the fact was, that miniſterial meaſures were ſo unpopular, that the generality of people were utterly unwilling to countenance them.

Objections were made to ſeveral parts of the treaties with the above mentioned Princes. The levy money was ſeven pounds ten ſhillings a man; an unreaſonable price for a ſoldier in a country where they are ſo cheap as in Germany. A large ſubſidy was to be paid to thoſe Princes, and to be continued after the return of their troops. From the computation of theſe and other contingencies, it was inſiſted that a thouſand Germans would coſt

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more than fifteen hundred men levied in Britain. But what gave the moſt offence, was, that twelve thouſand of theſe foreigners, the Heſſians, were to remain under the ſole command and controul of their own General.

It was replied by miniſtry, that however great the expence might be repreſented, one happy circumſtance attended it; which was, that it would not be laſting. A body of ſuch excellent ſoldiers, as the German auxiliaries were univerſally acknowledged to be, added to ſuch brave troops as our own, would ſurely prove more than equal to the reduction of America, and the termination of the war in one ſingle campaign. Some indeed were ſo ſanguine, as to aſſert that ſo formidable a power would, by its very appearance, put an end to all reſiſtance. All Europe could not outmatch, in military merit, the numerous body of men that would act under the banners of Britain in America. It was by adopting ſuch meaſures, that matters there would ſoon be brought to a concluſion. It was expenſive, but it would be ſpeedy and deciſive; and therein true policy conſiſted.

Allowing that ſomething more might be given, reckoning man for man, we ſhould conſider, that in the one inſtance we paid our money for a meer recruit, but in the other we procured a real ſoldier.

To this it was replied by oppoſition, that neither the force we had collected at ſo immenſe a coſt, and in which we ſo highly confided, nor any other we ſhould be able to employ in the proſecution of this war, would conclude it with ſuch facility and ſpeed as miniſtry had flattered themſelves. The ſituat on and local circumſtances of America, made a conqueſt of it impracticable in ſo ſmall a compaſs of time as one, or even two campaigns. Such was the opinion of men well converſant in military affairs, and well acquainted with America. The Ameri-

cans, alone and unſupported, were adequate to the taſk of reſiſting us, and maintaining their ground a much longer ſpace, if they were but tolerably commanded, and knew how to improve the advantages around them.

This treaty was not leſs vigorouſly oppoſed in the
5th March, 1776. Houſe of Lords. The Duke of Richmond moved for an addreſs to the King, requeſting him to countermand the march of the German auxiliaries, and to give immediate orders for a ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities in America, in order to lay a foundation for a treaty, to compoſe the differences between Great Britain and her Colonies.

He took an hiſtorical view of the treaties between the Britiſh and the Heſſian Court for many years paſt; ſhowing that this had gradually riſen in its demands, in every ſucceſſive treaty; and had never departed from any precedent once eſtabliſhed. But the preſent one outwent all the former in the exorbitancy of its conditions. He aſſerted, from the calculations he had made, that the body of ſeventeen thouſand three hundred foreigners, taken into Britiſh pay, would, including all contingencies, occaſion an expence of no leſs than fifteen hundred thouſand pound within the courſe of a twelvemonth; a ſum greater than was ever yet known to be expended for the maintenance of ſuch a body of men in the like ſpace of time.

Theſe were ſerious conſiderations in the depreſſed ſituation of our affairs; eſpecially when we adverted to that dreadful load of debt which was hourly accumulating. The alarming ſtate of our finances had, more than twelve years before, been pleaded as an inducement to ſheath our ſwords in the midſt of victories and conqueſts on every ſide, that had laid every enemy at our feet, and enabled us to complete the ruin of every foe this nation had to fear. But our triumphant career was ſtopped by

the cry of thoſe who predicted certain ruin to this country, if it perſiſted any longer in the purſuit of its ſucceſſes. To the aſtoniſhment of Europe, we gave up the many juſt hopes and expectations we had formed, to the clamour of men who repreſented the nation as inſolvent, and unable to advance a ſtep further in the augmentation of its debts, or the increaſe of its expences.

What propitious event had, ſince the lapſe of twelve years, brought about ſo great an alteration in the ſtate of our finances, as to enable us to change the ſyſtem of our politics, ſo much recommended at that period? Was it the payment of ſeven millions out of one hundred and fifty? What infatuation could precipitate a government, once famed for its wiſdom, into a war, the conſequences of which muſt, at all events, prove ruinous? No reputation, no benefit, could poſſibly accrue from it. It was an inteſtine war, calculated for the certain detriment of the ſtate, which ever of the parties had the upper hand; and it was equally diſgraceful, as it ſhowed we wanted prudence and temper in the management of our domeſtic concerns.

A circumſtance that ſtruck every ſenſible obſerver, was the eagerneſs and animoſity with which this unhappy quarrel was proſecuted. There had been a mixture of malignity and contempt in the meaſures that had for ſeveral years been adopted againſt the Colonies; and now that their firmneſs and perſeverance in the aſſertion of their juſt rights was not to be overcome with threats and ſupercilious language, they were to be devoted to the horrors of war, and to be treated as a nation from which we had experienced every ſort of contumelious uſage.

Unprovided with a ſufficient number of troops for the cruel purpoſes deſigned, or unable to prevail upon the natives of this country to lend their hands to ſuch a ſanguinary buſineſs, miniſters had

applied to thoſe foreign Princes who traded in human blood, and hired armies of mercenaries for the work of deſtruction. They forgot with what virulence they had reprobated the employing of foreigners, at the concluſion of the laſt peace; how impolitic it appeared in their eyes, how inconſiſtent with the intereſt of this nation, how fatal in its tendency. Continental connections were at that time condemned with a violence the more aſtoniſhing and ill founded, as by means of our alliance with an illuſtrious monarch, we had not only ſupported him againſt his numerous enemies, but occaſioned thoſe diverſions in Germany of the forces of our moſt formidable enemy, which had prevented him from attending to the defence of his tranſmarined dominions, and enabled us to make an entire conqueſt of them. But theſe were objects unattended to by thoſe politicians who then directed our affairs. They had conceived ſuch an antipathy to foreign alliances, that of whatſoever ſervice they could be proved, or however preſſing the neceſſity of not being wholly deſtitute of friends upon the continent, ſtill they diſclaimed all ideas of that nature, and maintained that we ſtood in no need of alliances abroad, and were quite ſelf-ſufficient at home.

At the expiration of a few years, the ſame ſet of individuals now came forwards with a ſyſtem oppoſite and contradictory in every reſpect. It was not only a meer foreign alliance that was ſought and courted; an army of foreigners was now to be introduced into the Britiſh dominions; but not to protect them from invaſion, not to deliver them from the ravages of an hoſtile army, but to aſſiſt one half of the inhabitants in maſſacreing the other,

It was ſtrongly aſſerted by oppoſition, that this foreign connection would be productive of the moſt fatal events. Hitherto this unhappy diſpute had

been confined to the people of the British empire: the Colonies did not ſeem in the leaſt inclined to call in any other nation as umpire. They apparently depend.d upon themſelves for its ſupport and termination; and did not, in all probability, imagine that we could be ſo imprudent as to aſſociate others to our domeſtic feuds. But when they ſaw that we had recourſe to this odious expedient, they would no longer think themſelves bound to ſtand ſingly in the conteſt; they would, after our example, apply to ſtrangers for aſſiſtance. And could they be cenſured for departing from any line of moderation, while we manifeſted by our conduct that we were determined to obſerve none?

But it was much to be feared that their imitation of our meaſures, would be far more dangerous to us, than our precedent would be to them. Inconſiderable and needy Princes were no allies for them. They would connect themſelves with ſuch, as inſtead of requiring ſubſidies for their aſſiſtance, would ſupply them with men and money; ſuch as would eſpouſe their quarrel, not from mercenary motives, but from hoſtile conſiderations to this country, from ancient habits of inveteracy, from a thirſt of revenge for the loſſes and humiliations occaſioned by our arms.—Theſe were the allies that would fly to their ſuccour, on the firſt ſummons; no pecuniary ſtipulations would retard them; ſuch a prize as America would command any price, and any terms. A retaliation of all the calamities and diſgraces they had ſuffered at our hands, would arm on ſuch an occaſion every ſtate and nation that bore an enmity to Britain.

No opportunity to diſtreſs this country was ever equal to that which it now afforded to the many who were ſeeking it. The ſcene of military operations would be in another hemiſphere; thither we muſt ſend our armies, our fleets, our treaſures, every fighting man we could raiſe at home, and every

mercenary we could hire from abroad. The beſt of our blood would be ſhed; the braveſt of our people would be torn from us; we ſhould in the courſe of this deadly feud, be drained of our inhabitants, and of our ſubſtance, and become expoſed at laſt to the attacks at home of thoſe watchful rivals, who never yet ſuffered an occaſion to eſcape them to humble or to injure this country.

Could men, who were not abandoned to the meaneſt ſentiments of vindictiveneſs, lay their hands on their boſoms, and profeſs their ſincere approbation of meaſures that were evidently pregnant with ſuch evils? Could they give their aſſent, without wounding their conſcience, to a ſyſtem that preſented nothing but bloodſhed and deſolation, and the avowed intent of which was the barbarous compulſion of part of their fellow ſubjects to comply with the abſolute will of the other part? What motives of ſufficient weight could be ſtated for refuſing to liſten to the remonſtrances of thoſe who pointed out a prevention of all theſe evils? And what arguments could preponderate againſt a requeſt to ſuſpend them a while, that Parliament might have time again to ponder how far it ought in juſtice and humanity to recede from the ſtrictneſs of its demands, and to fix on ſuch final terms, as every diſpaſſionate man ſhould acknowledge to be honourable to the parent ſtate, and not injurious to ſo reſpectable a number of Britiſh ſubjects as inhabited the large continent of America.

Theſe various allegations were combated on the part of miniſtry by much the ſame reaſonings as had been uſed in the Houſe of Commons. The plea of neceſſity was a ſhield with which they covered all the meaſures they had lately adopted. But they repreſented them not only as neceſſary, but as judicious and well concerted. That of treating with foreign Princes for the loan of their troops, they

aſſerted, was far from detrimental; the terms were not exorbitant, conſidering how indiſpenſibly they were known to be wanted, the extraordinary ſervice they were to go upon, the lands and ſeas they were to traverſe in their going forth and coming home, and the very great uncertainty of their return.

The computation of the expences attending them was much overrated. But were it otherwiſe, had the expence been even greater, the emergency was ſuch, that we muſt have complied with any terms demanded. Still, however, we ſhould probably have no reaſon to complain: if the coſt was great, ſo was the purchaſe; no leſs than the ſubjugation of the American continent in a campaign or two. Such was the clear expectation of thoſe who were deemed fully adequate to the conſideration of the ſubject.

Did thoſe, continued miniſtry, who diſapproved of their meaſures, wiſh them to give up the conteſt, and abandon the Americans to thoſe they chuſed to adopt? there was no medium between this, and the proſecution of the ſyſtem of enforcing obedience.—Every proof had been given that nothing leſs would reduce and keep them within the bounds of ſubjection. This indeed they had totally caſt off, and could no longer be viewed in the light of ſubjects: they were in their inclinations no part of the Britiſh empire. But that was no argument why we ſhould conſent to this relinquiſhment. By ſuch conduct they had forfeited the rights they enjoyed in common with us; but it did not follow that our claims upon them had loſt their validity: by renouncing us, they had thrown themſelves out of our protection, and become ſtrangers; as ſuch we now treated them, and ſhould continue to do, until they returned to a due ſenſe of the connection that ought to ſubſiſt between a parent ſtate and its dependencies. Theſe were cogent reaſons why we ſhould not ſcruple to employ againſt them both our own forces and

thoſe of our allies; who, in this caſe, had a much better title to be conſidered as a part of ourſelves, and againſt whom it was highly unbecoming to break out into ſuch diſcontent, as they certainly came to befriend us, and to ſtand by our ſide in aſſerting our rights.

Enough had been ſaid to convince impartial people that little was to be apprehended from the countenance that foreign powers might give to America: were policy out of the queſtion, we might have ſome cauſes for apprehenſion: but it was ſo evident that their plaineſt intereſts militated againſt their undertaking the defence of our Colonies, that it was not a ſubject deſerving of diſcuſſion. But allowing it to be ſuppoſable that they ſhould be guilty of ſuch infatuation, was not this an additional motive to exert ourſelves with all ſpeed, in order to terminate the conteſt, before they were ready to enter into it as parties againſt us?

After long and violent debates, the queſtion upon this important ſubject was carried in favour of miniſtry, by one hundred votes to thirty-two, in the Houſe of Peers, and by two hundred and forty-two againſt eighty-eight, in the Houſe of Commons.

After the deciſion of this buſineſs, another came on that cauſed no leſs ferment. The Secretary at March 11th, War gave notice, that the ſum of eight
1776. hundred and forty-five thouſand pounds would be neceſſary to defray the extraordinary expences of the land-forces, and other ſervices incurred from the commencement of March of the preceding year, to the end of January of the preſent.

An intimation of this nature, excited one of the moſt violent ſtorms of oppoſition that was ever known. Never, ſaid they, was ſo vaſt a demand made for contingent expences incurred in ſo ſhort a time. It was truly a demand for extraordinaries, as no man could tell in what manner ſuch an im-

menſe ſum could poſſibly have been employed in the narrow ſphere to which its operations had been confined, though every one knew that they had been of no efficacy.

They adduced the journals of ſeveral victorious campaigns, to prove the exorbitancy of ſuch a demand. Among others, they dwelt upon that of ſeventeen hundred and ſixty, the year when Canada was finally reduced. As that event had happened only fifteen years before, the value of money, and the coſt of charges bearing much the ſame proportion as at the preſent time, they were the better able to make a comparative eſtimate.

From the various calculations they made on this occaſion, they inferred that no leſs than one hundred pounds a man had been expended upon the garriſon of Boſton, conſiſting of about ten thouſand men, within leſs than the term of a year; during which time, they had been reduced to great extremities, through want of proviſions, and had endured a variety of wretchedneſs.

If ſuch were to be the future demands of miniſtry, in what manner would they provide for the ſupport of an army of more than fifty thouſand men in America? who certainly would not make a conqueſt of it in two or three campaigns, whatever ſome weak and unintelligent individuals had thought proper to boaſt.

Loaded with ſuch enormous contingencies, how was the nation to furniſh the other no leſs requiſite expences for the navy and ſtanding forces at home? all which muſt now be conſiderably augmented if we meant to put ourſelves on a footing of ſecurity.

Never had miniſtry been aſſailed with ſuch vehemence. They ſtood their ground, however, on the approbation and authority of Parliament. They had, ſaid they, the legal ſanction of a conſtitutional majority for all the meaſures they had taken. The ſyſtem

they

they purſued was not of yeſterday; it had been the eſtabliſhed rule of acting for years, and was not more ſtrongly countenanced at the preſent moment, than it had been at the firſt hour. Such a continual uninterrupted plurality of ſuffrages, evinced a probability of rectitude in the meaſures which they ſo invariably approved. Neither were miniſters ſo wedded to their own opinions, as to have formed a determination to perſiſt in them, ſhould the general ſentiments of that body undergo a change. But while the repreſentatives of the nation adhered with ſuch remarkable inflexibility to the ideas they had ſo long maintained, miniſtry was fully perſuaded that theſe ideas reſted on a ſolid foundation. This conviction, inſtead of being ſhaken, gathered vigour from the very multitude of arguments that had been brought to invalidate the opinions of this majority. The indiſputable abilities of thoſe who adduced them, their ingenuity, their eloquence, their knowledge, their induſtry, were eminently conſpicuous, and excited univerſal admiration: but with all their exertions, and ſolicitude to eſtabliſh their own ſentiments, they conſtantly failed, and their opponents remained as firmly as ever in the poſſeſſion of their own ground. What muſt a cool and diſpaſſionate obſerver infer from this, but that ſomething radically defective was perceived in the notions of the minority, by that inceſſant and prodigious majority that diſſented from them? This perpetual inferiority of number, though not an unanſwerable proof, was, however, a ſtrong preſumption that their reaſonings, though urged with great powers of language and imagination, had not ſtrength enough to convince the judgment of their opponents, however they might prove entertaining, and diſplay the talents of the ſpeakers.

Confiding therefore in the unaltered diſpoſition of mind that had ſo long and ſo ſtrikingly characteriſed

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ſo many reſpectable members of this, and the preceding Parliaments, miniſtry thought itſelf in duty bound to tread in the ſame path it had ſo long continued in, not doubting but the iſſue would prove its conduct to have been equally ſteady and prudent.

As to the expenditure of thoſe ſums, the vaſtneſs of which was alluded to with ſuch acrimony, and loaded with ſuch heavy cenſures, an impartial enquiry would ſhow, whether they had been properly applied. It ought to be remembered, that the operations they were employed in, were equally numerous and chargeable; and that the various undertakings which the ſpirit of the nation had reſolved upon, were of ſo novel and difficult a nature, as to require not only the moſt reſolute exertions, but the moſt extenſive and liberal ſupport.

The ill ſucceſs of the preſent campaign, was to be attributed to the unexpected obſtinacy of the Colonies. They perſiſted, againſt their evident intereſt, in a refuſal of accommodation upon the fair and eaſy terms that had been propoſed to them a twelvemonth ago. Their uncompliance had induced the Province of Maſſachuſet to exerciſe that reſiſtance for which, not imagining it would have been carried to ſuch extremities, we had not made an adequate preparation: but now that nothing but the moſt daring and ſtubborn oppoſition was expected from the Coloniſts, we ſhould no longer withhold our ſtrength; we ſhould put it forth in ſuch a manner, as would ſhow that Britain was fully able to cruſh them. Parliament had ſufficiently hearkened to the dictates of moderation, to be henceforth abſolved of the imputation of ſeverity, in letting looſe the vengeance of the kingdom againſt ſuch incorrigible offenders. A ſeſſion or two more of firmneſs and vigour, would bring about an alteration of affairs,

fairs, that would make the Colonies repent the provocations they had given to this country.

After the moſt violent altercation, the motion for the ſupply was carried by a majority of one hundred and eighty to fifty-ſeven.

Notwithſtanding the minority ſaw themſelves overwhelmed upon every occaſion, by the irreſiſtible torrent of numbers, their perſeverance ſtill remained unſhaken. March 14th, 1776, another attempt was made in the Houſe of Peers to prevent a continuance of hoſtilities. It was moved by the Duke of Grafton, that an addreſs ſhould be preſented to the Throne, requeſting that, in order to ſtop the further effuſion of blood, and to manifeſt the ſincere deſire of King and Parliament to reſtore peace, and to redreſs grievances, a proclamation might be iſſued, declaring that if the Colonies ſhould preſent a petition to the commander in chief of his Majeſty's forces in America, or to the commiſſioners appointed for ſuch purpoſes, ſetting forth what they conſidered to be their juſt rights, and real grievances, the King would conſent to a ſuſpenſion of arms, and refer their petition to Parliament, where they might depend it would be duly conſidered and anſwered.

Among a variety of arguments in ſupport of this motion, it was repreſented as peculiarly proper at a time when a new opinion had gone forth, very alarming to the Americans, and highly diſpleaſing to all true lovers of the conſtitution. It had been aſſerted in the other Houſe, that the Americans did not deſerve to be treated with; and that they ought to be reduced to unconditional ſubmiſſion. Such an aſſertion tended clearly to increaſe their repugnance to a reconciliation, and to excite them to make the moſt deſperate efforts to reſiſt us. It militated no leſs againſt the principles of the Britiſh government: it recommended a method of proceeding with

with ſubjects, ſimilar to thoſe adopted in abſolute monarchies abroad; where inſurrections are puniſhed in a ſummary and diſcretional manner, utterly inconſiſtent with the ſpirit of freedom.

But there was another motive to induce this country to ſuſpend the blows it was preparing to ſtrike. The long apprehended and frequently predicted interference of foreigners in the cauſe of America, began already to appear. Intelligence was received that two French gentlemen had ſome time ago arrived in America, and held a conference with General Waſhington, by whom they were referred to the Continental Congreſs, to which they immediately repaired.

Such a circumſtance ought to awaken our moſt ſerious attention. It ſhowed what we had to expect if the quarrel were to laſt. It opened a proſpect, which all aſſurances, from whatever authority they might proceed, could not hide from the eye of the diſcerning. The longer we delayed in coming to terms with our Colonies, the greater the danger would be, that the inſtigations of foreigners would render them indifferent or averſe to treating. Such favourable offers and promiſes would be held out to them, as would make thoſe laid before them on our part, hardly worth attending to. It was not to be doubted that temptations of every ſort would be uſed to allure them into other connections, and to prevail upon them to throw off their allegiance to this country. No time was therefore to be loſt in ſtriving to obviate thoſe evils by all ſuch means as were compatible with the dignity of the Britiſh nation. By protracting this neceſſary buſineſs, ſuch difficulties might intervene as would render it impracticable. The Americans, confiding in the ſupport they would be ſecretly promiſed, might riſe in their demands, and require ſuch conceſſions, as would be too degrading for us to yield in any ſituation. Theſe con-

conſiderations, which were obvious and required no further comment, ought to induce all well-wiſhers to this country, to haſten, by the moſt ſpeedy and prudent methods, an accommodation with America.

Were miniſtry, after ſo ſolemn a warning as they had received on this day, to refuſe with their wonted perverſeneſs to deſiſt from thoſe meaſures that threatened this country with ſo many dangers, what muſt the Colonies infer from it, but that the Britiſh miniſtry harboured the moſt vindictive deſigns againſt them, and were determined to labour the enforcement of them at all hazards? They would hear what had paſſed in the Houſe on this critical day; and would learn with no leſs aſtoniſhment than indignation, that no motives of ſafety to Britain, no principles of humanity for the people of America, had been able to retard a moment, the vengeance meditated againſt them for having dared to oppoſe the ſupreme will of the people in power on this ſide of the ocean.

Adminiſtration ought to reflect, that the ſeaſon was at hand for operations: when once begun, the minds of people would be made up, as it were, for what might happen, and have taken their determination to wait the events of the campaign, before they would reſume the conſideration of any ſubjects, but thoſe relating to war. Britain was now to decide, perhaps for the laſt time, whether a treaty or the ſword ſhould end the conteſt. Obſtinacy on its part, would not fail to render the Americans equally obſtinate: they would take example from us, and after having ſo often appeared at our feet, in the poſture of ſupplicants, they would throw off that character, and reſolve henceforth to meet us on the footing of equals.

Such were the reaſonings on the ſide of thoſe who ſupported the motion. But they were totally ineffectual:

fectual: the die was caſt between Great Britain and America; and there ſeemed a general diſpoſition on both ſides to commit their fate to the deciſion of arms. The moderate and diſpaſſionate had exhauſted all their ſtock of arguments; and were now reduced to the neceſſity of ſtanding ſtill, and patiently expecting that ſome unpropitious event would incline one of the parties to liſten to overtures.

The general anſwer to the allegations of the minority on this occaſion, was, that no reliance could be placed on the aſſurances, ſo inceſſantly reiterated by the Coloniſts, of their deſire to terminate matters amicably, and to return to a ſtate of tranquility and obedience. Their language had indeed all the merit of plauſibility; but their actions did not correſpond with their proteſtations. They had not evidently formed among themſelves, and agreed to any fixed terms of pacification; otherwiſe they would have ſpecified them, before they would have ſuffered this country to have gone ſuch lengths in its preparations to reduce them. It was highly probable that they doubted its ability to compel them to ſubmiſſion, and in conſequence of this idea, had propoſed to deceive us into hopes of ſettling matters to our ſatisfaction, with a view to gain time for the accompliſhment of the various ſchemes they were projecting, and had now brought ſo forwards, that no inducements that we could hold out, would be ſufficient to counterbalance their eagerneſs to give them a full trial.

Nothing, therefore, remained for Great Britain, in the preſent circumſtances of affairs, but, in imitation of the Colonies, to have recourſe alſo to a trial of her own ſtrength, and of thoſe meaſures for which ſhe had made ſuch vaſt preparations. All was now completed for the laſt ſcene of the buſineſs that was to be tranſacted between Great Britain and America. As minority had inſinuated that this lat-

ter would not ſtoop any longer to the ſtile of ſupplication, it was become the more requiſite for majority to aſſume at once the tone of maſters, and to ſpeak to its rebellious ſubjects with that firmneſs and authority which men are entitled to uſe with inferiors, who have offended them, and refuſe to make that reparation which is due to the dignity of a ſuperior.

After an altercation that laſted till very late in the night, the Duke of Grafton's motion was rejected by a diviſion of ninety-one votes, to thirty-one.

Thus ended a debate which put a period, for a while, to all attempts to conciliatory meaſures. The ſtandard of reciprocal defiance ſeemed now to be hoiſted, and both parties conſenting to take their laſt trial in the field.

CHAP. XIX.

Evacuation of Boſton.—Siege of Quebec raiſed.—Provincials defeated in Canada.—Tranſactions in North and South Carolina, and Virginia.

1776.

WHILE theſe Parliamentary diſcuſſions were taking place, and filling the whole nation with anxiety and expectation how they would terminate, ſcenes of a different nature were acting in America.

The Britiſh troops at Boſton, had now ſuffered a long and tedious blockade. From the nineteenth day of April, made for ever memorable by the affair of Lexington, they had been cloſely inveſted on every ſide, and cut off from every refreſhment and relief, which a garriſon, conſiſting of ſuch numbers of ſick and wounded, naturally required.

They were reduced to the utmoſt extremities by the non-arrival of thoſe victuallers which government had fitted out, and loaded with all manner of proviſions, at ſo prodigious an expence. The information they received of the quantities deſigned for them, had raiſed their ſpirits, and filled their minds with gratitude at the proof thus given of the concern which their country felt for them; but their expectations were long diſappointed; and they had many misfortunes to undergo before they received any part of thoſe much wanted ſupplies.

Several of theſe veſſels, after weathering out the continual ſtorms they had met with, were taken by the enemy in the very ſight of port. Contrary winds, unfavourableneſs of tides, and other circumſtances of weather and poſition, prevented the men of war from coming to their aſſiſtance. The greater number of the coal ſhips were loſt in this manner. The

deprivation of theſe was ſeverely felt in a climate, where the rigour of the winter renders fuel ſo indiſpenſibly neceſſary.

The ſituation of thoſe inhabitants who adhered to the cauſe of America, was peculiarly calamitous. Impriſoned and debarred of all communication with their friends, they were expoſed to the ill treatment of the garriſon; and though protected from harſh uſage to their perſons, by the native generoſity of the Britiſh nation, ſtill they were liable to thoſe contemptuous marks of averſion, from which men are ſo unwilling to abſtain in their domeſtic feuds. As they were not entitled to the ſame regards as the military, their allowance was ſo ſcanty, that they were almoſt in want of neceſſaries.

The length of the ſiege, and continual expenditure of military ſtores, in the numberleſs branches of ſervice that conſumed ſuch quantities, occaſioned an apprehenſion that they would not laſt till the arrival of a freſh ſupply. To the dread of wanting ammunition, was added that of being ſoon ſhort of ſalt proviſions; which were, during a long time, the only food the garriſon could depend upon for ſubſiſtence.

In the midſt of theſe diſtreſſes, the courage and reſolution of the Britiſh military was conſpicuous, and fully refuted the invidious charge ſo frequently in the mouths of foreigners, of the French eſpecially, that the Engliſh are unfit for the hardſhips of war, and though brave and intrepid in the field, are unable to endure fatigue, unleſs provided with all the conveniences of life.

They underwent, in the ſucceſſive rotation of duty, all the ſeverities of a winter campaign in this rigorous climate. Thoſe who were ſtationed on Bunker's-Hill, had no other ſhelter than their tents againſt its unceaſing inclemency during this terrible ſeaſon. Here they lay expoſed to winds, ſnows,

ſtorms, and cold, almoſt intolerable to Britiſh conſtitutions.

The wants of various kinds with which in the mean time they were aſſailed, obliged them to have recourſe to every expedient that induſtry ſharpened by ſuffering can invent. That of fuel, which they could bear leaſt of any, was in ſome degree remedied by the timber of houſes which they deſtroyed for that purpoſe.

As the deficiency of proviſions began to be alarming, veſſels were diſpatched to the Weſt Indies to procure what could be ſpared or obtained. But the condition of the iſlands was ſuch, that they feared to be ſtraitened themſelves, and could afford little aſſiſtance. Their ſtock was ſo low, and their expectations of being relieved when it was expended, were ſo precarious, that they were conſtrained to huſband it with the ſtricteſt parſimony, and could not admit others to a participation.

In default of this reſource, armed ſhips and tranſports were ordered to Georgia, with an intent to procure rice, and what other refreſhments could be got. But the inhabitants, took up arms, oppoſed their landing, and permitted no intercourſe with the ſhore. This occaſioned violence on each ſide. Cannons were planted on the beach, and an engagement enſued, which terminated to the diſadvantage of the armed veſſels. They loſt ſeven ſhips loaded with rice, which were ſet on fire by the enemy.

While the Britiſh troops were undergoing theſe diſtreſſes, the Provincials were well covered in their encampment before Boſton, and ſupplied with all neceſſaries and comforts. Their deſign was to wait till the freezing ſeaſon began, for a more vigorous proſecution of hoſtilities. Their intentions were to avail themſelves of it, in order to ſtrike ſuch a deciſive blow, as would, if executed according to the

plan propoſed, put at once a final concluſion to all the hopes of Britain in this quarter.

The latter end of December, is the time when the froſt uſually ſets in with great ſeverity in New England. The harbour of Boſton, and all the rivers and waters in its environs, are covered with a depth of ice ſufficient to bear any weight. This was the paſſage over which their determination was to force their entrance into Boſton, and to make an attack upon the ſhipping. They doubted not, with the great force that would be collected from all parts for an enterprize of ſuch importance, to make themſelves maſters of the town and garriſon, and to take or deſtroy every ſhip in the harbour.

Had the ſeverity of the froſt correſponded with their expectations, it is not improbable that they would have been able to execute their deſigns. Upwards of ſixty thouſand men would have been the force employed from the four Provinces of New England only, beſides the multitudes that would have crouded from the other Colonies, to have a ſhare in this deſtruction of the Britiſh fleet and army.

But fortunately for both, the winter proved unuſually mild, and they waited in vain for its aſſiſtance in the operations they had projected. They were, much againſt their will, obliged to remain inactive, and ſuffer the garriſon to enjoy ſome tranquility as well as themſelves.

In the mean time, the ſpeech made by the King at the opening of the ſeſſion, was brought over to America, together with intelligence of the reception which the petition from the Continental Congreſs had met with from miniſtry. The arrival of this news at the camp before Boſton exaſperated the Provincials to a greater degree than had ever been experienced. They teſtified the exceſs of their rage, by burning publicly the Royal ſpeech, in the midſt of execrations at thoſe who had adviſed it. Having

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by this act, diveſted themſelves of all remains of reſpect or attachment for any object that related to Britain, they next proceeded to an alteration of their colours. From a plain red ground, they changed them to thirteen ſtripes, as a denotation of the number of the United Colonies.

The winter, though ſevere enough to induce both parties to remain quiet in their quarters, did not prevent the ſmall craft belonging to Maſſachuſet from exerting themſelves very ſucceſsfully againſt the veſſels arriving from England with ſupplies and ſtores. A tolerable number had found means to enter the port of Boſton, where they proved of great relief to the garriſon; but the activity of the American cruizers was ſuch, that many fell into their hands, to the vaſt detriment of the troops, from the particular importance of their cargoes.

Among the captures they were continually making, was unfortunately an ordnance veſſel, which had ſeparated from her convoy. Being of no force, ſhe was compelled to ſurrender to a ſmall privateer. This was one of the moſt uſeful prizes that could have fallen into their hands. She contained a cargo ſaid to be worth fifty thouſand pounds. It conſiſted of a great number of braſs cannon, with a large quantity of ſmall-arms, and a vaſt variety of military ſtores. It enabled the Provincial army to reſume their military operations with additional advantage, and to make a much more formidable appearance than before.

As ſoon as the ſeverity of the weather began to abate, the Provincials indicated by their motions, that they intended to preſs the town with more vigour than ever. The fact was, that General Waſhington had received orders to exert his utmoſt activity, in order to reduce the Britiſh forces either to ſurrender, or to evacuate the place, before the ſuc-

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cours could arrive which were now ſhortly expected from England.

During the night of the ſecond of March, a battery was opened on the Weſtern ſide of the town, from whence it was ſeverely fired upon with cannons and bombs; and on the fifth, it was attacked from another battery on the Eaſtern ſhore. The ſuddenneſs and expedition with which the Provincials acquitted themſelves on this occaſion, aſtoniſhed the moſt experienced of the Britiſh officers. Fourteen days did the garriſon experience the moſt dreadful cannonade and bombardment, without the leaſt intermiſſion.

The ſituation of the troops became very alarming, from the vivacity and ardour which ſeemed to animate the operations of the enemy, and the certainty of their being able to ſurround and command every part of Boſton, as well as of the harbour, from the high grounds, on which they were now occupied in erecting batteries. No medium appeared to remain between diſlodging the Provincials from their new works, or quitting the town.

The ſpirit of the General was too great to embrace the latter meaſure, until he had tried every method that was practicable to effect the former. To this intent, a ſelect body was prepared for embarkation, in order to land at the foot of the hill called Dorcheſter Neck, projecting into the bay on the Eaſtern ſide of *the town. The Provincials had fortified it* in ſuch a manner, as would, in all probability, have rendered the attacking of it no leſs bloody and deſtructive than that of Bunker's-Hill, even if it had ſucceeded: but the works were ſo ſtrong, ſo well provided with artillery, and defended by ſuch numbers, that there was little proſpect of forcing them. As they ſtood on a high ground, the Provincials had provided upwards of a hundred hogſheads filled with ſtones, to roll down the hill upon the Britiſh

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lines, as they advanced; and the aſcent was ſo ſteep, that the ranks muſt infallibly have been broken before they could have reached the ſummit, and attacked the trenches.

Before the full diſcovery of this ſtrength, every preparation had been made for a moſt vigorous attack. But while the troops were making ready to embark, a dreadful ſtorm came on unexpectedly in the night, and prevented the deſign from taking place then. It was reſumed the next morning; but on a cloſer inſpection, it was judged unadviſable to proceed, as it could only have tended to ſacrifice the lives of a great number of brave men to no purpoſe.

It was however with much reluctance, that the Britiſh General, his officers, and ſoldiers, could prevail upon themſelves to deſiſt from this deſperate and impracticable attempt. They were conſcious of the high opinion entertained of them by their countrymen at home, and of the ſanguine expectations that had been formed from their bravery.—They knew that they were looked upon as ſuperior in every military conſideration to the enemy they had been ſent to encounter, and that no ſuſpicion was harboured that he would have been able to withſtand them. Theſe reflections filled them with indignation at the peculiarity of their fate. They were incloſed on all ſides in ſuch a manner, as made it impoſſible for them to diſengage themſelves, and take poſſeſſion of ſuch ground as would have enabled them to come at the enemy. Every effort they made to that intent, laid them open to inevitable deſtruction. In ſuch mortifying circumſtances, a retreat ſeemed the only alternative left them. But here they were met by that point of honour which is ſo powerful in men of ſpirit, and ſo often induces them to devote themſelves to certain ruin, ſooner than expoſe it to the leaſt blemiſh.

After much deliberation, it was at length concluded, that to remain any longer in Boſton, would be imprudence and temerity in the higheſt degree, as it muſt prove infallibly the loſs of the whole army. A determination was therefore taken to embark it, with all its appurtenances, and to abandon a place that was no longer tenable. A retreat of this nature was not, however, without its difficulties. The enemy was poſted on all the commanding grounds, and at hand to make a quick and dangerous impreſſion, wherever they thought proper. Fortunately the Provincials remained within their works, and ſeemed not in the leaſt inclined to form any obſtruction to the deſign. Probably they were glad to facilitate a meaſure, by which they recovered without bloodſhed, poſſeſſion of a town of the firſt importance in North America. Had they proceeded to any hoſtilities to prevent it, they knew it was in the power of the Britiſh army to have inſtantly reduced the town to aſhes; a misfortune which it would have taken many years to repair.

Near a fortnight was conſumed in carrying this irkſome meaſure into execution. Had the embarkation of the military and warlike ſtores been the only object, it would have been readily accompliſhed; but proviſion was alſo to be made for the departure of almoſt two thouſand of the inhabitants, whoſe adherence to the cauſe of government, obliged them to accompany the army for their ſafety.

Much embaraſſment and anxiety attended the removal of ſuch multitudes, together with their effects, and the baggage of the army, which was very conſiderable. The ſick and wounded were very numerous, and with the women and children, occaſioned by their helpleſs condition, an additional diſtreſs. The attention and care of the General in this trying ſituation, reflected equal honour upon

pointments and vexations of a ſituation unworthy of his courage, with unſhaken firmneſs; he now faced the mortifying perplexities with which he was ſurrounded, with no leſs compoſure.

The army was at this time full of diſcontents.—reinforcements had been long expected, and had not come; both officers and ſoldiers thought themſelves neglected; near ten months were elapſed ſince the arrival of the laſt, and the impoſſibility of their taking the field without them was well known in England. Since the commencement of November, no regular and certain advice had been received of what was to be their deſtination. This created murmurs and complaints that could not be eaſily quelled, as they did not appear ill founded. It ſeemed as if they were conſidered as bound in ſome meaſure to deliver themſelves from the difficulties that preſſed upon them, by their own exertions. Ill ſucceſs, wants, and inconveniencies, increaſed this ill humour, which was further aggravated by the jealouſies and diſſentions that began to prevail between the army and navy.

In this unhappy diſpoſition of mind, and derangement of affairs, a dangerous voyage was to be undertaken. Halifax, in Nova Scotia, was the port to which the fleet was bound. The diſtance was not great, but the ſtorminеſs of the coaſt, and the tempeſtuouſneſs of the ſeaſon, were highly alarming; it was now the middle of March; the equinoctial winds were ſet in, and thoſe from the north-eaſt were equally ſtrong and boiſterous. Were they to be blown out to ſea, and obliged to ſteer for the Weſt Indies, their proviſions were too ſcanty for ſuch a voyage. But ſhould they arrive in ſafety at the deſtined port, ſtill they had but little comfort and relief to find in ſuch a bleak and barren country as Nova Scotia.

After the embarkation had been effected, it was a whole week before the fleet could put to ſea. Contrary to their apprehenſions, the wind and weather proved however fair at laſt, and their paſſage to Halifax was remarkably favourable. On their departure from Boſton, ſeveral ſhips of force were ſtationed there, for the protection of the veſſels arriving from England; but the bay was ſo extenſive, and ſo full of ſmall harbours for privateers to lie on the watch, that they could not, with all their vigilance, prevent a number of ſhips from falling into the hands of the Provincials. What made their loſs the heavier, they were laden with arms and ſuch warlike ſtores as were moſt needed by the enemy. Some tranſports were alſo taken with troops on board, which ran into the harbour, not knowing the place was evacuated.

In this manner did Boſton return to the poſſeſſion of the people of Maſſachuſet. The boats employed in the embarkation had not entirely completed it, when the Provincials entered the town in military triumph. They were received by the inhabitants with tranſports of joy. General Waſhington was hailed as their deliverer, and congratulated on the ſucceſs of his arms by the public addreſſes of the Provincial Aſſembly, and the warmeſt acknowledgments of all thoſe who now recovered the houſes and poſſeſſions they had been obliged to abandon.

The confuſion unavoidable in the hurry of a retreat, occaſioned many valuable articles to be left behind. Among theſe were a conſiderable quantity of artillery and ammunition, eſpecially at Bunker's Hill and Boſton Neck. The diſtance of theſe places prevented their being brought off, and the ſhortneſs of time, their being rendered unſerviceable. But the principal booty conſiſted in the immenſe variety of goods, eſpecially woollens and linens, a ſupply

preſſing need. The other articles of various kinds were alſo exceedingly numerous.

Having thus recovered their capital, one of the firſt acts of government exerciſed by the Provincial Aſſembly, was to order the effects and the eſtates of thoſe who were fled with the Britiſh troops to Halifax, to be publicly diſpoſed of, and their produce applied to the uſe of the ſtate. Such adherents to Britain as had riſked to remain behind, were treated with great ſeverity. They were proſecuted as enemies and betrayers of their country, and their eſtates were confiſcated accordingly.

That object, however, which principally occupied the attention of the people of Maſſachuſet, was to put Boſton into ſuch a poſture of defence, as might prevent its falling again into the power of Britain. To this intent, they applied with all diligence to the fortifying of it on every ſide. They employed, on this occaſion, ſome foreign engineers that had been lately ſent to America for ſuch purpoſes. So eager were they in the proſecution of this buſineſs, that every able bodied man in the town, with very little diſtinction of rank, chearfully cooperated in this work, and ſet apart two days in the week to complete it with the more ſpeed.

The fact was, they were not a little apprehenſive of the return of the Britiſh fleet and army, as ſoon as they were properly reinforced. What chiefly induced them to imagine that the deſigns upon Boſton were not abandoned, was, that juſt before their departure, the Britiſh forces demoliſhed the fortifications of caſtle William, which, by its ſituation, would have rendered it impracticable to attack the town by ſea.

Nor was General Waſhington without anxiety about the deſtination of the fleet and forces that had left Boſton. New York, by its poſition, lay quite expoſed to the moſt ſudden attack. [illegible]

on the very day that Boſton was evacuated, detached ſeveral of his beſt regiments for the defence of that city. Herein he doubtleſs acted with prudence; but the condition of the Britiſh army was not fit for an expedition of ſuch importance. It did not amount to ten thouſand effective men; and was by no means provided with due neceſſaries.

While the American arms were thus ſucceſsful at Boſton, they were buſily occupied in the blockade of Quebec, where Colonel Arnold was exerting the utmoſt efforts under a multitude of diſcouragements. He found by experience, that he could place little dependence upon the adherence of the Canadians, who were eaſily diſpirited by diſappointments, and ready to quit him on the appearance of danger. The reinforcements promiſed by Congreſs, did not arrive expeditiouſly enough to ſecond his operations. They had ſo many objects to occupy their attention, that it was with the utmoſt difficulty they could provide for them all, with tolerable ſufficiency and diſpatch.

The march of theſe reinforcements, which was in the midſt of winter, was attended with prodigious hardſhips. They endured them with that fortitude and conſtancy, which at this time characteriſed the Americans: the fatigues undergone in the expeditions headed by Montgomery and Arnold, had filled them with an emulation which inſpired them with equal confidence and perſeverance.

General Carlton, though delivered from any immediate apprehenſions from the enemy, ſtill remained in a very diſagreeable ſituation. His communication with the adjacent country being cut off, he was reduced to much diſtreſs for want of proviſions. Whatever he procured was not without great danger and difficulty. The Provincials way-laid all parties that were ſent out upon this intent, and

improved every advantage, and kept the garriſon in continual alarms. His vigilance was inceſſantly employed in guarding againſt the various endeavours of the Provincials to ſurprize him. They were indefatigable in contriving ſtratagems to this purpoſe, as they found that he was too well prepared to be overcome by open force.

They began, however, to be ſenſible, that unleſs they brought their deſigns to a ſpeedy execution, it would ſoon become too late to continue them with any proſpect of ſucceſs. The ſeaſon was now approaching when ſuccours would arrive from England, and oblige them to act on the defenſive. The ſiege therefore was recommenced in due form; batteries alſo were erected on the ſhores of the river St. Lawrence, againſt the ſhipping in the harbour, and attempts made to burn it by means of fire ſhips. Though unſucceſsful, they diſplayed much courage and conduct in ſeveral of theſe enterprizes. While one of them was executing, they had prepared ſcaling ladders, and other implements to ſtorm the town; and held themſelves in readineſs to eſcalade it, while the attention of the beſieged was turned to the conflagration of the ſhipping. Though they failed in the main attempt, they ſucceeded in part: they burned a large number of houſes in the ſuburbs; and the garriſon was compelled to pull down the remainder, to prevent the fire from ſpreading.

While the Provincials were employed in this manner, numbers of the Canadian Nobleſſe aſſembled, and collected a large body of their countrymen, in order to raiſe the ſiege of their capital. They put themſelves under the command of Mr. Beaujeu, a gentleman of bravery, and who was very deſirous to ſignalize his attachment to government: but he was ill ſeconded: the Provincials met him on his march, and entirely defeated him.

Encouraged by this ſucceſs, the Provincials continued the ſiege with redoubled ardour. But they met with no better ſucceſs than before. They had now tried every expedient to reduce it: they had uſed bombs and red hot balls, after failing in their endeavours to carry it by aſſault; and they were now convinced it was out of their power to attack it by regular approaches, as they had no artillery of weight enough for ſuch an undertaking. This, added to the ſlowneſs with which reinforcements arrived, through the badneſs of roads, impediments of weather, and want of requiſites, retarded their operations, and leſſened the courage and vigour with which they had been at firſt proſecuted.

In the midſt of theſe difficulties, the ſmall pox, a diſtemper deemed peculiarly fatal on the continent of North America, broke out among them with great violence, and carried them off in numbers. The dread which this terrible diſorder ſtruck into the troops, operated like a pannick. The anxiety for ſelf-preſervation, overcame all other conſiderations. Multitudes fled from what they looked upon as certain death; and it became impoſſible to carry on military duty with proper diſcipline and regularity.

While they were in this diſtreſsful ſituation, they were informed that ſuccours were on their way from England, and would ſpeedily arrive at Quebec. This, together with the calamity they were afflicted with, made it neceſſary for them to retire from the town, before their arrival; not doubting, the moment they were landed, that Governor Carlton would immediately make a vigorous attack on the beſiegers, who, in their preſent condition, he well knew, were unable to face ſuch a force as he would then have under his command. But this deſign was prevented by the expeditiouſneſs with

made its way through the ice up the river St. Lawrence before ſuch an attempt was thought practicable. The appearance of theſe ſhips threw the Provincials into great confuſion: the communication was immediately cut off with that part of their forces which lay on the other ſide of the River; and it was now too late to provide for the retreat they had meditated.

May 6th, 1776. As ſoon as the reinforcement was landed, together with the marines, and had joined the garriſon, General Carlton put himſelf at their head, and ſallied out upon the Provincials. He found them in the greateſt diſorder. As their camp was not intrenched, and they were already retreating, no reſiſtance was made, and they fled on all ſides with the utmoſt precipitation, leaving all their artillery and warlike ſtores. Their flight was ſo rapid, that they could not be overtaken, and the only priſoners were the ſick and wounded. While the military were thus employed on ſhore, the lighter armed veſſels proceeded up the River with the utmoſt diligence, and ſeized a number of veſſels belonging to the enemy.

In this manner was raiſed the ſiege of Quebec, after a duration of five months, during which, the activity and courage of the garriſon, the abilities and intrepidity of their commander, and the ſpirit and perſeverance of the Provincials were all equally remarkable. This event gave the finiſhing blow to all the attempts and expectations that Congreſs had formed on this quarter; and their troops from this time met with nothing here but defeats and diſaſters.

The ſucceſs which awaited the Britiſh arms in this Province, was attended by a behaviour full of humanity. Many of the Provincials, through wounds and ſickneſs, had not been able to accom-

cealed in the woods and ſcattered habitations about the neighbourhood, in a very diſtreſt and deplorable condition. General Carlton generouſly iſſued a proclamation, ordering proper perſons to ſeek them out, and give them all neceſſary relief at the public expence. To induce them not to refuſe theſe compaſſionate offers, he further promiſed, that as ſoon as they were recovered, they ſhould be at perfect liberty to return to their own homes.

Shortly after the repulſe of the Provincials, the forces expected from England arrived. The General now ſaw himſelf at the head of more than twelve thouſand regulars, among whom were the troops of Brunſwick. He directly haſted to Three Rivers, a place ſituated midway between Quebec and Montreal, and ſo called from its proximity to three branches of a large river that falls into the St. Lawrence. Here, it had been imagined, the Provincials would have made a ſtand; but they had continued to retreat until they had reached the river Sorel, near one hundred and fifty miles from Quebec. They were met here by the reinforcements appointed for their aſſiſtance; but the whole of their force was conſiderably weakened by ſickneſs and other calamities.

Notwithſtanding theſe diſcouragements, a bold attempt was projected by their commanders for the ſurprize of the Britiſh troops at Three Rivers. A conſiderable body of theſe was poſted at this place under the command of General Frazer. Another was near them on board the tranſports, under General Nesbit. The main body under Generals Carlton, Burgoyne, Philips, and Reideſel, the German General, were ſtationed partly on ſhore, and partly on the River, in the way from Quebec. The Provincials were encamped at the Sorel, about fifty miles diſtant from Three Rivers; and between them

by a number of armed veſſels, and tranſports with troops.

But theſe obſtacles did not diſpirit them. Two thouſand of their beſt men, headed by General Thompſon, embarked at the Sorel, and fell down with the tide, keeping on the ſouth ſide of the River, till they arrived at a place called Nicolet, oppoſite to Three Rivers. From thence, in the night, they paſſed to the other ſide, in order to ſurprize the body under General Frazer. Their intent was to attack him about break of day. They were in three diviſions, one to act at each end of the town, and the remaining to ſupport them, or to cover a retreat in caſe of need. But this they were determined not to think of till extreme neceſſity, compelled them, and they found that no other means remained to ſave them from utter deſtruction.

Unfortunately for their deſign, the time they took in croſſing the river, was ſo long, that though 8th June, they paſſed the ſhipping unobſerved, they 1776. were diſcovered at their landing. The alarm being thus given, General Frazer prepared to meet them. The difficult ground they were obliged to march over, threw them into diſorder, and when they made their attack, they were received, contrary to their expectation, by men who were waiting for them, and who had not only the advantage of poſition, but of a number of field-pieces, which did great execution among them.

While they were making the moſt vigorous efforts to ſurmount theſe obſtacles, they were apprized that General Niſbet, who commanded the troops on board the tranſports, had landed them, and was marching with all ſpeed to fall upon their rear. A retreat was now their only reſource. As General Niſbet lay in the way to their boats, they were obliged to make a large circuit through a deep

close on each side for some miles. They traversed it at last with excessive toil, and sheltered themselves in a wood that stood at the further end of it. Here the British troops ceased the pursuit. The Provincial commander was taken, with about two hundred of his men.

The strength of the British army in this Province was now such, that the Provincials lost all hopes of being able to face it. They demolished the works they had erected at the confluence of the Sorel into the river St, Lawrence, and carried off their artillery and stores. General Burgoyne landed here with a considerable detachment, in order to advance to Fort St. John, while the remainder of the fleet and army sailed up the river towards Montreal. They found this place abandoned by the Provincials.—After taking possession of it, the main-body set forwards to join General Burgoyne, against whom it was not doubted the Provincials would collect all their force, and make a resolute stand.

In expectation of such an event, he proceeded with great order and circumspection along the So-
18th June, rel; but on his arrival at St John's, he
1776. found, that after destroying all that could not be carried off, the Provincials had set fire to the place. They had done the same at Chamblee, and burned all the vessels and craft which were too heavy to drag up the rapid stream of some parts of this river. They made no stop, as it was thought they would have done, at Nut Island, at the entrance of Lake Champlain, but crossed it over immediately to Crown Point. This retreat was conducted with great care and prudence by General Sullivan,—Though constantly pursued, and often on the point of being surrounded by the numerous bodies that kept close upon him, yet he found means, by great vigilance and speed, to extricate himself from the

from an active, an intrepid, and a ſuperior enemy. His merit on this occaſion was publicly acknowledged by the thanks of Congreſs.

Thus was a final end put to all hoſtilities in Canada. The Provincials loſt in their expedition into this Province many of their beſt officers, and great numbers of their braveſt ſoldiers. To ſay nothing of General Montgomery, the loſs of whom was equal to that of an army, others of great, though inferior worth, were either ſlain or captured. In their retreat it was computed, that from the day when they broke up their camp before Quebec, to that of their arrival at Crown Point, their loſs in killed, priſoners, and dead through wounds and illneſs, amonnted to little leſs than a thouſand men; of whom, beſides thoſe who fell, or were taken in the engagement near Three Rivers, and in various ſkirmiſhes, no leſs than four hundred fell at one time into the hands of the Britiſh troops at the Cedars, a place about fifty miles higher up than Montreal.

But if the Provincials were compelled to quit Canada on the one hand, the Britiſh army could not improve its ſucceſſes on the other. The Lake Champlain lay between it and the former, who were entirely maſters of its navigation, and had a number of armed veſſels in readineſs to impede its paſſage. It became therefore neceſſary to conſtruct a ſufficient number to ſecure it; but this required much time and labour. Six veſſels, completely armed and equipped for this purpoſe, were arrived from England; but the falls at Chamblee rendered it impracticable to bring them up into the Lake. It now appeared abſolutely indiſpenſible to take them to pieces, and re-conſtruct them, as well as many others, in order to gain poſſeſſion of the Lake, and to tranſport the Britiſh forces to the other ſhore.

While theſe tranſactions were taking place in

ſouthern Provinces were no leſs agitated. In North Carolina, Governor Martin, though obliged to fly for ſhelter on board a ſhip, was not the leſs determined to exert his activity in the cauſe for which he ſuffered. He had formed a project for the reduction of this Province to obedience, of which he was not the only perſon who had conceived very ſanguine hopes.

There was at this time in North Carolina, a reſolute and unruly claſs of men, known by the name of Regulators. They had long lived independent, in a manner, of all regular controul.—They had been conſidered as rebels by the King's Governors, and they were held in much the ſame light by the new government, to which they were remarkably averſe. With theſe, and the emigrants from the Highlands of Scotland, who compoſed a conſiderable body, Governor Martin had formed a connection, by means of which he promiſed himſelf to reduce this Province to ſubjection. The courage and the fidelity of the Highlanders to the Britiſh cauſe, he was well aſſured of; and he was no leſs confident of the attachment of the Regulators, and of their great ſuperiority in arms to the other inhabitants of the Province. They were an active and hardy race of men, uſed to continual motion, and from their manner of living, ſingularly expert in the handling of their fire-arms.—They were not a little dreaded by the reſidue of their countrymen, who from habits of indulgence and eaſe, did not incline to thwart them, as knowing from the daringneſs of their diſpoſition, that they were not to be moleſted with impunity, and from their numbers that they would prove a dangerous and powerful enemy.

Commiſſions were ſent to the heads of theſe people for the raiſing of ſeveral regiments. Colonel Macdonald, a brave and enterprizing offi-

appointed their General. By the Governor's direc-
Feb. tion, he erected the King's ſtandard, and
1776. publiſhed a proclamation, by which all men were ſummoned on their allegiance to repair to it.

Excluſive of this force, which was conſiderable, and on the exertions of which he placed much reliance, the Governor's confidence was further increaſed by the intelligence that a powerful armament, and a large body of regular troops, were deſtined to act in the Carolinas, and were making the beſt of their way to his aſſiſtance.

But the Provincial Aſſembly were fully ſenſible of the danger of ſuffering a man of ſuch activity and reſolution as Governor Martin, to re-poſſeſs himſelf of the power of which they had deprived him. They collected, with all poſſible diligence, the whole ſtrength of which they were maſters, and in the mean time diſpatched ſuch force as was in readineſs, to oppoſe the Royaliſts. It was commanded by General Moore, who with ſome cannon, took poſſeſſion of a ſtrong poſt near them, which he fortified. Here he was ſummoned by General Macdonald to join the Royal ſtandard, under pain of being treated as an enemy. His anſwer was, that if they would ſubſcribe an oath of fidelity to the Congreſs, and lay down their arms, they ſhould meet with the uſage of friends, and the raſh proceedings of which they had been guilty ſhould be forgiven. But if they perſiſted in an inſurrection, which, from their want of ſufficient ſtrength to ſupport it, they muſt be conſcious would end unſucceſsfully, they muſt expect the ſevereſt treatment.

The Provincials were in a few days ſo powerfully reinforced, that they amounted to near eight thouſand men. Such a ſuperiority compelled the Royaliſts to provide for their ſafety by a precipitate retreat. Their want of artillery had prevented them

from attacking the Provincials in their trenches, while they had the advantage of numbers; and they now ſaw, when too late, the temerity of their undertaking. They conſiſted indeed of near two thouſand men, but were unprovided with many neceſſaries. In this ſituation they truſted their intrepidity would make amends for deficiencies. They were by this time almoſt incloſed by the enemy; but by dint of reſolution and dexterity, they diſengaged themſelves, and by forced marches through woods and difficult paſſes, they forced their way, the ſpace of fourſcore miles, and in ſpite of the enemy's continual efforts to intercept them, gained Moore's Creek, within ſixteen miles of Wilmington, where they expected to be joined by Governor Martin and General Clinton, who was lately arrived with a conſidetable detachment.

But this junction was effectually prevented by the Provincials, who purſued his party ſo cloſely, that in order to avoid them, Colonel Macdonald judged it neceſſary to attempt the paſſage of the Creek, notwithſtanding a body of the enemy lay on the other ſide, under Colonel Caſwell, with works well lined with men, and provided with artillery. But the place where the attempt was made, not being fordable, the royaliſts were obliged to croſs over a wooden bridge, of which the Provincials, not having time to pull it down entirely, had taken up the planks. They had, however, by greaſing the beams and remaining timbers, rendered them ſo ſlippery, and unſafe to tread upon, that on the Colonel's party advancing, they could not make good their footing any where. In this condition, they were

Feb. 27th, 1776. aſſailed on all ſides by ſuperior numbers, and totally defeated, after loſing their braveſt officers and men. Among thoſe was Captain Macleod, with ſeveral other Highlanders, who fell

Their General, and moſt of their leaders were taken priſoners, and the reſt betook themſelves to flight.

Had this inſurrection ſucceeded in the manner propoſed, it would have proved of eſſential ſervice to the cauſe of government, by the junction of thoſe numbers in the back ſettlements, who were waiting the arrival among them of the regular troops they had been promiſed. Nor would they have remained inactive on this occaſion, had they not been deficient in arms, and eſpecially in ammunition. But this failure put an end to the whole ſcheme, and diſpirited the royaliſts from attempting any other. The Provincials were now ſo thoroughly upon their guard, and ſo well prepared, that no further expectation was entertained of making any impreſſion upon them. Their force appeared to be much more conſiderable than it had ever been imagined. They had, in the ſpace of a fortnight, aſſembled near twelve thouſand men, well armed and accoutered. Before the preſent troubles, they had ſtood in perpetual awe of the regulators; but neceſſity had taught them the uſe of arms; and the ſucceſs they now met with, gave them a courage and confidence they had not felt before.

In Virginia the royaliſts, under Lord Dunmore, met with no leſs diſappointments. The fleet on board of which they had taken refuge, continued to infeſt the rivers and the coaſts of that Province; but as the ſhores were well guarded, no deſcent could be ventured, and no refreſhments could be procured. This made their condition highly diſtreſsful. The exceſſive heat of the climate, added to the badneſs of the water, and want of wholeſome proviſions, and the perpetual confinement of ſuch multitudes in ſmall unroomy veſſels, produced a peſtilential fever among them, which proved extremely fatal, eſpecially to the blacks. In this deplorable ſituation, they were driven from every road and

creek by their incenſed countrymen. It was found at laſt indiſpenſibly neceſſary, in order to avoid periſhing through want of food, to quit this fatal and inhoſpitable coaſt. After ſetting fire to the leaſt valuable of their veſſels, theſe unfortunate fugitives failed with about fifty remaining to them, ſome to Florida, others to Bermuda and the Weſt India iſlands.

While the affairs of Congreſs proſpered in this manner in North Carolina and Virginia, they were earneſtly employed in forming a marine. In the beginning of march, they diſpatched Commodore Hopkins, with a ſquadron of five frigates, to the Bahama iſlands. He landed on the principal one, called Providence, and brought off the ordnance and military ſtores; but the powder, which was his chief object, had been conveyed away. In his re-
6th April, 1776. turn, he took ſeveral prizes, and fell in with the Glaſgow frigate, commanded by Captain Tyrringham Howe, in company with a tender: this latter was taken; but the Glaſgow made a reſolute defence, and eſcaped, notwithſtanding the ſuperiority of the enemy.

It was hoped, however, at home, that the expedition that was now preparing againſt South Carolina, would compenſate for the ill ſucceſs that had attended the Britiſh affairs in the neighbouring Provinces. A ſquadron was fitted out at Portſmouth, which ſailed from thence in December; but met with ſuch unfavourable weather, that it did not reach Cape Fear, in North Carolina, till the enſuing May. Here it was unhappily detained by a concurrence of accidents till the end of the month; during which time the people at Charles Town had full leiſure to make what further preparations they judged requiſite, againſt the attack which they now plainly perceived was meditated againſt them.

The ſquadron which was commanded by Sir Peter Parker, conſiſted of two ſhips of fifty guns, four of thirty, and two of twenty, an armed ſchooner, and a bomb-ketch. The land forces were under Lord Cornwallis, and Generals Clinton and Vaughan. At the time they proceeded on this expedition, they had no intelligence of General Howe's motions. He had diſpatched a veſſel with inſtructions for their purſuing other meaſures than thoſe they had in contemplation; but through a complication of difficulties and delays, ſhe did not arrive at Cape Fear till the ſquadron had left it.

In the beginning of June, this ſquadron anchored off Charles Town Bar. It was neceſſary for the two largeſt ſhips to take out their guns, before they could croſs it; and though lightened as much as practicable, they touched the gound, and were ſeveral times in danger of ſticking faſt.

The Commander in Chief of the Provincials upon this occaſion, was General Lee. He had exerted himſelf with remarkable activity in putting New York in a ſtate of defence againſt the attack which had been ſuſpected from General Clinton. He had, with the ſame expedition, provided for the ſecurity of the coaſts of Virginia, and of North Carolina; and was now employing himſelf with equal diligence for the protection of Charles Town.

After croſſing the Bar, the next obſtacle to be ſurmounted, was a fort on the ſouth weſt point of Sullivan's iſland: it commanded the paſſage to Charles Town, which lay ſix miles further to the weſt. Though lately begun, and not completely finiſhed, it was in a ſtronger ſtate than repreſented to the Britiſh commanders; who knowing the force with which it would be attacked, and depending on the valour of their people, did not heſitate in reſolving to aſſail it immediately.

To

To the eaſtward of Sullivan's, lies Long Iſland, ſeparated from it by ſome ſhoals, and a creek, ſaid to be fordable at low water, and not above two feet deep: oppoſite this ford, the Provincials had poſted a ſtrong body with cannon and intrenchments. General Lee was encamped on the main land; from which there was a communication to Sullivan's iſland, by a bridge of boats, over which he could throw ſuccours at pleaſure, to ſupport the body of men poſted there in order to obſtruct the paſſage of the Britiſh troops.

The ſituation of theſe upon Long Iſland was extremely incommodious. It was a mere heap of ſand, without tree or ſhelter of any kind, where they ſtood expoſed to the burning heat of the ſun in the hotteſt ſeaſon of the year. The inconveniencies which attended the fleet and army were indeed exceſſive. The water they drank was extremely brackiſh, and their proviſions were both indifferent and ſcanty. Notwithſtanding the great activity with which they laboured to forward their preparations, unexpected and unavoidable delays retarded the execution of many of the purpoſes neceſſary to complete them. Near a whole month was conſumed in this manner, which afforded the enemy ample time to improve every advantange that could be ſuggeſted.

The twenty-eighth day of June, all things being in readineſs, the bomb-ketch began the attack in the morning, by throwing ſhells at fort Sullivan. About mid-day, the two fifty gun ſhips, and two thirty gun frigates, came abreaſt of the fort, and began a ſevere cannonade. Three other frigates took their ſtation between the iſland and Charles Town, with an intent to enfilade the batteries of the fort, and to cut off, at the ſame time, the communication of the iſland with the main land, there-

riſon from retreating. This poſition, too, would have obſtructed any attempt from fire ſhips to interrupt the main attack. But theſe purpoſes were all fruſtrated by the ignorance of the pilot, who led the frigates into the ſhoals, where they all ſtuck faſt. Two of them were, however, diſentangled; but they received ſo much damage, that they were unfit for the ſervice propoſed; and the other was ſet on fire, that ſhe might not fall into the hands of the enemy.

In the mean time, a heavy and inceſſant fire continued between the ſhips and the fort. The Provincials behaved on this occaſion with a courage and coolneſs that aſtoniſhed the Britiſh officers and ſeamen: the execution they did was dreadful.—Never was attack made with more intrepidity, nor defence with more deliberate valour. Thoſe who had been in various encounters of this ſort, concurred in declaring that they had never been witneſſes of ſo reſolute a reſiſtance.

The Briſtol having loſt the ſprings upon her cable, which were ſhot away, lay ſome time terribly raked by the enemy's fire. They diſcharged a great quantity of red-hot balls, and ſet her twice in flames. The behaviour of Captain Morris, her commander, was extraordinary in every reſpect:—After receiving five wounds, he ſtill remained upon deck, till obliged to quit it, in order to undergo the amputation of his arm; after which he undauntedly returned to his ſtation, and received two wounds more; the laſt of which was from a red-hot ball, which took him in the belly, and put an end to his life.

Such was the ſlaughter on board the Briſtol, that every officer and ſeaman upon her quarter-deck was either killed or wounded, excepting the Commodore, Sir Peter Parker, who ſtood alone unhurt, and conducted himſelf throughout the whole of this

deſtructive day with great intrepidity and preſence of mind. Captain Scott, of the Experiment, behaved with no leſs bravery; and beſides the loſs of an arm, was otherwiſe ſo dangerouſly wounded, that his life was deſpaired of.

The execution from the Britiſh ſhipping was very conſiderable; but the works of the fort lay ſo low, that numbers of the ſhot flew over, and they were of ſuch a nature, as to ſtand the weight of very heavy metal, without being eaſily demoliſhed.—They were compoſed of palm-trees, and earth very thickly intermixed. During the height of the attack, the batteries of the fort remained ſo long ſilent, that the aſſailants concluded the fort had been abandoned: but this ſilence was only occaſioned through want of powder; they had expended all their ſtock, and were obliged to wait for a freſh ſupply from the camp on the main-land.

It had been expected, that the troops poſted on Long Iſland would have participated in the operations of this day, by fording over Sullivan Creek at low water, forcing the enemy's intrenchments, and marching up to the fort; but the depth of water proved much greater, upon trial, than had been imagined; the works thrown up by the enemy, were found, on a nearer approach, much ſtronger than they had at firſt appeared; their numbers and artillery far more formidable; and the poſition of General Lee ſuch as to enable him to overpower with eaſe, any force that could have been brought to act againſt him.

This dreadful engagement laſted till darkneſs obliged the Britiſh ſquadron to give over. The tide of ebb was nearly at the loweſt, and it was drawing towards ten, when the Commodore, having done all that ſkill and courage could prompt a brave officer to do upon ſuch an occaſion, thought proper to diſ-

poſſibility of ſucceſs. From the time the engagement commenced, to that when the ſhips drew off, ten full hours were counted; a long ſpace for ſo cloſe and inceſſant a conflict!

The Briſtol and the Experiment were ſo much damaged, that it was apprehended they could not be got over the bar. This, however, through great ſkill and labour, was accompliſhed, to the utter aſtoniſhment of the Provincials, who had conceived it impracticable. The frigates ſuffered alſo conſiderably, though not proportionably to the large ſhips, at which the Provincials principally directed their fire.

It had been hoped that the bomb-ketch, which carried a mortar of a peculiar conſtruction, would have proved highly ſerviceable in annoying the enemy; but whether it proceeded from overcharging it, on account of the diſtance at which ſhe was ſtationed, or ſome defect in the manner of fixing that engine, the bed that held it was in a ſhort time ſo looſened, that it became of no uſe.

Great was the applauſe beſtowed upon Colonel Moultrie, who commanded in Fort Sullivan, and to whoſe intrepid behaviour, the ſucceſsful defence of it was in a very great meaſure owing. He was well ſeconded by his officers; and great gallantry, and even heroiſm, were diſplayed by ſome of the ſubalterns. A ſerjeant of grenadiers, named Jaſper, ſeeing the flag-ſtaff ſhot away, jumped from one of the embraſures upon the beach, took up the flag, fixed it on a ſponge-ſtaff, and amidſt a ſtorm of ſhot, remounted the merlon, and leiſurely fixed it in its former place. For this uncommon act of bravery, he was publicly preſented with a ſword of value by the Provincial Preſident, and was alſo promoted. Another ſerjeant, whoſe name was Macdonald, being mortally wounded by a cannon-ball, "I die," ſaid he, in his laſt moments, "for a glo-

rious cauſe; but I hope it will not expire with me."—A ſentiment not unworthy of the greateſt characters mentioned in hiſtory.

The number of killed and wounded on board the Britiſh ſquadron, amounted to near two hundred. Thoſe of the enemy could not be aſcertained; but their loſs muſt have been conſiderable, as moſt of the guns of the fort were diſmounted, and freſh reinforcements poured in during the whole time of the engagement.

Uncommon ſpirit appeared on this occaſion among all the people who accompanied this expedition. A number of volunteers offered themſelves, and acted with great bravery. At the head of theſe was Lord William Campbell, Governor of South Carolina, whoſe courage prompted him to undertake the command of the lower-deck guns of the Briſtol, a ſtation of peculiar danger. Many of the ſeamen belonging to the ſhips of war, being unable, through illneſs, to attend their duty, the ſailors on board the tranſports courageouſly ſupplied their places.

The behaviour of the Americans in this, and the various military tranſactions that had taken place ſince the commencement of hoſtilities, though it did not diſmay, yet it highly ſurprized the Britiſh officers and ſoldiers employed againſt them.—Expecting from the general information they had received, that they were a people unapt for war, from the life of peace and plenty to which they had been uſed, they could not help expreſſing their aſtoniſhment at the proofs they were continually meeting how wrongly they had been informed.—The truth was, that notwithſtanding the proſperity of their domeſtic circumſtances, their habits were by no means effeminate; their diſpoſitions, as already hinted, were remarkably active, and their

dies, and sharpen their minds. But that, which of all other causes, was the most powerful and efficient in stimulating them to act with resolution, was that very insinuation of their want of courage and capacity for war. It proved a constant spur in all their enterprizes; they were continually reminded of it by their leaders; it filled them with resentment and indignation; and, together with the intimate per-

CHAP. XX.

Declaration of Independency.

1776.

WHILE theſe various tranſactions were taking place in the different Provinces throughout America, the Congreſs was deeply engaged in the preparation of that event which began now to be univerſally expected.

A circular addreſs was ſent to every Colony, ſtating ſeveral reaſons for which they judged it neceſſary that the authority of the Crown and Legiſlature of Great Britain ſhould be totally ſuppreſſed, and the powers of government aſſumed reſpectively by the Aſſembly of each Province.

They founded the juſtice and propriety of this meaſure, on the conduct held by Great Britain during a long time paſt, but eſpecially on the determinations contained in the prohibitory act lately paſſed, by which all intercourſe was forbidden with the Thirteen United Colonies. An interdiction of this kind, was, in their opinion, a formal excluſion from that protection which the Crown owed to its ſubjects. They were, in fact, declared outlaws, and lay expoſed to all people's mercy. They had nothing further to expect but ill uſage and depredation; and they were by proclamation, given over to be plundered and deſpoiled of their property by all who could ſeize upon it. Such was, they ſaid, the anſwer they had received to the dutiful and humble petition they had preſented to the Britiſh throne, in the name

dreſs of grievances, in order to a ſincere and permanent reconciliation.

So determined and irrevocable was the reſolution of Britain to eſtabliſh an arbitrary government in the Colonies, that not content with levying numerous armies, and equipping powerful fleets at home for that purpoſe, ſhe had applied to her foreign allies for the aſſiſtance of their troops, and was now preparing to invade the American continent with all the force her treaſures could procure.

For theſe reaſons, it was indiſpenſibly incumbent upon them to unite their arms and councils with the greateſt vigour, unanimity, and ſpeed. The danger was manifeſt and imminent; the exertions they had hitherto made, though conſiderable, muſt now be increaſed in a proportion with thoſe of their enemies. As theſe had diveſted themſelves of all manner of regard and feeling for the Americans, they were no longer bound to conſider them as their founders and parents, and were in all reaſon, abſolved from any farther allegiance to that monarchy and nation.

Engliſhmen, ſaid they, are no longer governed by thoſe maxims of equity and moderation, that led them to conſider us as brethren. National pride, and criminal influence, have deſtroyed that integrity and benevolence with which they uſed to attend to our concerns. Adminiſtration, for a ſeries of years, have been our declared enemies, and deſpotiſm is the ſyſtem they have long deſigned for the Colonies. The queſtion is now, whether we ſhall perſevere in the reſiſtance we have begun, or puſillanimouſly lay down thoſe arms which we have hitherto employed with honour and ſucceſs?

Such was the purport of the repreſentations made by Congreſs and its adherents. They were the natural reſult of the impreſſions made upon them by the dread they felt at the vaſt preparations to reduce

them. They now imagined that miniſtry intended to realize their fears, and to compel them to the moſt ſervile ſubmiſſion.

Until this apprehenſion began to prevail, whatever might have been the ſecret views of individuals, the Coloniſts did not think themſelves neceſſitated to carry their oppoſition any farther than to prevent the deſigns of miniſtry from taking place. They inſiſted on no more than the enjoyment of their ancient claims: a reconciliation on theſe terms was the utmoſt of their demands; and they had not yet foſtered the idea of tearing themſelves aſunder from a people from whom they derived their origin, and with whom a variety of powerful motives had long contributed to cement, and ſtill continued to ſupport their connection.

Thoſe, who relying on the temper and circumſtances of the times, had indulged themſelves in the formation of another plan, and whoſe ideas went much farther than thoſe of the generality, had not yet dared to unfold their minds. The public was not yet ſufficiently irritated to countenance their notions, and to eradicate old habits of attachment.

But the news of what was tranſacting in Britain, excited an alarm of a different kind from any of the former. Complaints and anger at the behaviour of the Coloniſts, had been followed by threats, and afterwards by an attempt to compel them to obedience; but ſtill the quarrel remained confined to the ſubjects of Britain; they were the ſole parties concerned, and all hope was not yet extinguiſhed of compoſing theſe unhappy diſſentions without foreign interpoſition.

But when they ſaw the ſphere of diſcord enlarged by the aſſociation of ſtrangers to this domeſtic diſpute, they began to be perſuaded, that thoſe who had accuſed the Britiſh miniſtry of entertaining the

were now convinced that ſlavery or deſtruction was the alternative intended for them in the councils of Britain.

This conviction ſhortly became general, and operated with prodigious effect: it expelled all the remaining ſentiments of reſpect and regard for the parent ſtate, and wrought a revolution in the minds of many, which paved the way for that which ſometime after entirely changed the face of affairs on the northern continent of America.

Numerous were the publications on this occaſion, tending to inflame the public againſt the meaſures of the Britiſh government. Many of them were compoſed with great art and energy; but none was ſo much read, and had ſuch diffuſive influence, as that which appeared under the title of *Common Senſe*.

It was in every reſpect a bold and animated performance. As it ſpoke the language and opinions of a large proportion of the people, it was received with vaſt applauſe, and recommended as a work replete with truth, and againſt which none but the partial and prejudiced would form any objections.

The reaſonings and arguments contained in theſe various writings, filled all companies and converſations, and excited a ſpirit of inquiry and diſcuſſion into the rights of human nature, and ſociety at large, ſuch as had never been exceeded, if ever equalled, in any country in chriſtendom.

The ingenuity and eloquence with which the advocates of America ſupported the cauſe of their country againſt the claims of Great Britain, were of a peculiar caſt. They denoted men who had dived deep into the ſubject, and were determined to bring to light the fruit of their lucubrations, and to avail themſelves of every plea, however it might prove out of the common track, or offend eſtabliſh-

their authority on the weakneſs and credulity of mankind. All ſuch reſtraints vaniſhed before individuals, who from their ſituation, had nothing to apprehend from thoſe of whom they were to invalidate the pretenſions or to leſſen the character. The more freely they ſpoke of crowns and ſcepters, the more they knew their maxims would be acceptable to a people, whoſe unpliant diſpoſition could bear ſubmiſſion to no power but their own.

They were now, ſaid they, involved in a conteſt of more importance than any that had agitated the world for many ages. The diſpute was not between ſtates contending for ſome towns or territories; the deſtiny of an immenſe continent was at ſtake: the intereſts they were defending were thoſe of whole nations yet to come: the deciſion of this diſpute would reach many ages into futurity; and their poſterity, long after they were no more, would have ample cauſe either to reſpect or to deſpiſe their memory.

Years had revolved ſince peace and reconciliation had been the continual ſubject of their thoughts, their entreaties, and their endeavours: but they now were called upon to attend to other objects. The ſword was drawn, blood had been ſhed; there was no more room for friendly diſcuſſions. They had entered upon another ſcene, and muſt now act the part of men who had a new character to ſupport.

There were people among them, who, caſting their eyes on the long connection that had ſubſiſted between Great Britain and her Colonies, imagined that its protection was neceſſary for their welfare; but though while in their infancy it was of ſervice, they were now matured into a nation, and wanted it no longer. It was become dangerous, as they that are able to protect, may think themſelves

The connection with Great Britain carried a ſplendid appearance; but how dearly muſt it be purchaſed? Her honour and her intereſts often led her to take part in thoſe quarrels that were almoſt perpetual on the continent of Europe. Her enemies, of courſe, were no leſs thoſe of America, and every diſaſter that befel her, muſt be participated by this continent.

The viciſſitudes that time introduces into all human affairs, would certainly put a period at laſt to the ſovereignty of Britain over America. The ſooner it was done, the better for both: ſhe would free herſelf from everlaſting contentions, and from a precarious authority; and America would eſtabliſh that form of government which ſuited her ſituation, and the inclinations of her inhabitants.

Nature could not intend that countries ſo diſtant from each other, ſhould be ſubject to the ſame government. What an abſurdity for men to ſail three thouſand miles in order to receive directions from ſtrangers how to manage their domeſtic concerns? Was it not more rational, as well as more honourable, that the ſeat of government in a great nation, and extenſive country, ſhould be at home?

Was it not a meanneſs unſupportable to generous minds, to be ſoliciting, as favours, what they could demand as rights? To depend upon the will and capricioufneſs of a foreign miniſtry, for the ſettlement of buſineſs in which they had no intereſt, from the nature of things were little acquainted with, and could not therefore be competent to ſuperintend?

Great Britain and America could no longer truſt each other. The feud between them was of a deadly nature, and had deſtroyed all mutual confidence. They were become, in fact, two ſeparate ſtates; and their intereſts were wholly different. Where ſuſpicion reigned, friendſhip could not ſubſiſt. Britain

tain had clearly ſhown, that ſhe meant to rule without controul; and America had evidently made it appear, that ſhe would not obey. Such being the determination on each ſide, what end could be anſwered by talking of any other method of reconciliation than a treaty of peace? This might take place in order to avoid effuſion of blood; but a return to their former ſtate of ſubordination to Great Britain, was a ſituation for which the Colonies were no longer calculated: they too much felt their own weight and importance: friends they might poſſibly become; but not ſubjects to Britain: nor could even this be expected, until ſhe had recognized the juſtneſs of this requiſition, and treated with them on the footing of equals.

A reconciliation with Great Britain on the terms of dependence, would involve America in continual ſcenes of domeſtic trouble and inconveniency. The jealouſy of Britain would labour covertly to obſtruct all improvements, and to ſtint the growth of her ſtrength and proſperity. The Colonies, on the other hand, would not ſtrive with leſs zeal to counteract ſuch endeavours: theſe would neceſſarily produce hatred and miſtruſt in the Americans. They would of courſe expreſs their reſentment, and again betake themſelves to reſiſtance. What other remedy could they recur to? The negative right veſted in the Crown, would be conſtantly exerciſed in oppoſing every beneficial ſcheme they propoſed; their induſtry would be cramped at home, and diſcouraged abroad; and every impediment thrown in their way, that rivalſhip could ſuggeſt. Thus, to be reconciled with Britain on the old plan, would be to admit among them their moſt inveterate enemy, in quality of a friend and protector. The abſurdity of ſuch a conduct was ſo obvious, that it was ſurpriſing the Britiſh miniſtry ſhould entertain

ſo contemptible an opinion of the Coloniſts, as t
hope they might be prevailed upon to adopt it.

The proſpect of the miſeries reſulting from ſuc
a condition, juſtified their determination never t
ſubmit to it. They had therefore the cleareſt righ
to take up arms in order to preſerve themſelves fro
ſo great a calamity. They were not the aggreſſors
they acted purely on the defenſive: their claim
were not injurious to ſociety; they were modeſt an
founded on ſimple reaſon; therefore they were juſt
The Colonies had now attained to that maturity o
political growth and vigour, which entitled the
to reſpect and conſideration in the world. The
claimed what was in conſequence their lawful due,
the rank and the rights of a nation. There were
many ſtates much inferior to them in power, wealth,
and population, that enjoyed this prerogative; why
ſhould they be denied it?

It was the univerſal deſire that they ſhould be
placed on the footing of a free ſtate. They were
far removed from the country from which their an-
ceſtors originated. The land they dwelt in furniſh-
ed them with the neceſſaries of life in the greateſt
abundance, and with many ſtaple commodities upon
which to found an extenſive and beneficial trade
with every nation in Europe. So ſituated, no re-
ſtraints but thoſe of abſolute coercion, would pre-
vent them from making the moſt of the many ad-
vantages beſtowed upon them by nature. But it
was evident that Great Britain would find it very
difficult to enforce a monopoly, were ſhe able to re-
tain them under ſubjection. The vaſt extent of
coaſt ſhe muſt guard with her cruiſers, the immenſe
tracts of land over which ſhe muſt keep a perpetual
watch, would, in ſpite of her vigilance, elude the
regulations ſhe might enact to preſerve the commer-
cial benefits of America entirely to herſelf. Other
nations would come in for an ample ſhare, and

would, whenever the Americans were defirous of an emancipation from the authority of Britain, aſſiſt them with all readineſs in effecting it.

It was therefore no leſs the intereſt of other powers than their own, that they ſhould withdraw themſelves from a connection with which they had every reaſon to be highly diſſatisfied, and which it was experimentally found, could not be continued without being productive of inceſſant altercation. This was itſelf a ſufficient motive to engage them to put an end to it.

They had now gone deep into the conteſt; it had already coſt them dear, and was not probably near an end. The wiſeſt courſe they could purſue, was to extend it at once to a nobler object than that which gave it riſe. This was merely to prevent Britain from ruling them oppreſſively; but were it not more adviſable to take a final determination not to ſuffer Britain to rule them at all? If they could reſiſt her oppreſſion, they could alſo reſiſt her power; the firſt depended on the laſt. It was a duty they owed to themſelves, to attain, as ſoon as poſſible, a ſtate of ſecurity from the grievances of which they had ſo much complained. If having it in their option to remove them for ever, they ſhould conſent to remain expoſed to them, they would be guilty of an unpardonable folly. It would render a repetition of the provocations they had endured, highly probable; and would reduce them to the neceſſity of re-commencing anew, what they had now more than half completed.

America was no leſs worthy of holding a place among free and independent countries, than Britain herſelf. In extent it was far ſuperior, nor leſs in the variety of its productions. The natives were the deſcendants of thoſe reſolute Engliſhmen who left their country in queſt of a freedom, which they

titudes who had emigrated from other parts of Europe, to enjoy, in this happy region of liberty, that toleration of civil and religious ſentiments, which they were denied in the land of their nativity.

Men of this deſcription were the moſt reſpectable of all characters. It was to ſuch that nations owed their felicity and grandeur. Activity and enterpriſingneſs of diſpoſition, were the moſt uſeful qualifications in a ſtate. From ſuch forefathers they were ſprung; and the world bore them witneſs that they had not degenerated.

Superior to Britain in the advantages of ſoil, equal to it in the merit of its inhabitants, the only inferiority of America was in numbers. But that was a deficiency which time was remedying with a rapidity that aſtoniſhed all thoſe who beheld it. By fair and unexaggerated computations, the population of America was reckoned to double in leſs than thirty years. It amounted at the preſent to more than two millions of white people. What a fund was this for increaſe, when once delivered from all reſtraints, and left entirely to the full operation of their unincumbered exertions?

But what need was there to juſtify their endeavours to obtain freedom? It belonged to them of right. They had purchaſed it with their blood at Lexington, at Bunker's Hill, and at the many other places where they had been called upon to aſſert it, by thoſe who would have denied them its poſſeſſion.

America was now in its prime. It had attained that ſtage of political exiſtence which is ſo emphatically, and no leſs truly ſtiled the youth of nations. Now, therefore, was the ſeaſon to employ its energy and vigour in aſſerting all the pretenſions it could form; in ſecuring all its rights; in a word, in eſta-

The Colonies abounded with ſtrong, healthy, and laborious men, full of courage and reſolution to maintain the claims and the honour of their country. They had motives to animate them in its defence, peculiar to themſelves. They were poſſeſſors and freeholders of the land they occupied: they did not hold it by thoſe precarious tenures that degrade the rural claſſes in Europe: they cultivated it for themſelves: it was in every reſpect their own: the life they led kept them at a diſtance from effeminacy; their bodies were robuſt, and their diſpoſitions manly.

In the ſmall ſpace of time ſince the Americans had taken up arms, they had exhibited ſpecimens of valour and ability that had ſurprized their enemies, and attracted the admiration of Europe. They had fully confuted thoſe baſe aſperſions that repreſented them as an unwarlike people, fit only for the occupations of peace, and unable to contend with ſuch veterans as would be employed againſt them: but they had met theſe veterans more than once in the field, and had not belied the character they had aſſumed of being as ready to fight for their liberty, as the Engliſh themſelves had been formerly; though now meanly conſenting to forge fetters for their American fellow ſubjects.

America need not deſpair of furniſhing individuals equal to the arduous taſk of conducting their affairs in the field, having already produced men who had conducted their councils with ſo much prudence. It was in tempeſtuous times like the preſent, that men of genius came forwards, and diſplayed their talents to the world. Many an exalted character would have lain dormant, but for thoſe revolutions that call forth and ſet in motion the abilities of mankind. The formation of ſtateſmen and heroes was due chiefly to them. Active ſcenes were a fig-

ſelves: they naturally took their ſtation in the midſt of ſtorms, to increaſe, to direct, or to allay them at pleaſure. Nature gave birth to ſuch men in all countries: but it was chiefly in ſeaſons of trouble and confuſion that they made their appearance; ſuch only were favourable to thoſe who were born to fix the deſtiny of ſtates and nations.

Without aſſuming more merit than was due to them, the Americans might challenge any people to exhibit, within the ſame proportion of time, a larger number of brave and reſolute men, of enterpriſing commanders, of intrepid ſoldiers, than the Colonies had afforded in the few months the operations of the field had laſted. They had ſtarted up unexpected, and in a manner ſelf-formed. But ſuch had, in all ages, been the conſequences of ſtruggles for national freedom: all hiſtory ſhowed it; and they only trod in the footſteps of thoſe patriotic champions of their country, who had preceded them in ſo many parts of the world; whoſe examples had been ſo frequently cited and followed by others, as well as themſelves; and would always raiſe up imitators among thoſe who had too much ſpirit to bear with oppreſſion.

The union of America was founded on the ſtrongeſt tie; a common apprehenſion of great misfortunes threatened indiſcriminately to all. This which in appearance was an object of terror, was in fact the moſt efficient cauſe of their ſecurity. It compelled them to be unanimous and faithful to each other. It was therefore the firmeſt baſis on which to erect ſuch a conſtitution, as would equally benefit and protect them. The ſeaſon of danger was the moſt proper, as well as the moſt cogent for ſuch a purpoſe: people then forgot their petty intereſts, and cordially joined for their public good. Too much ſafety unnerved thoſe great paſſions on which the common welfare ſo much depended.—

Were America arrived to that pitch of opulence and internal profperity, which muft, in the courfe of things, become her portion, it were much to be queftioned, whether the fame zeal and fortitude in oppofing an enemy, the fame difpofition to encounter hardfhips and difficulties, and above all, whether the fame unanimity would have been found among them, as now happily characterifed the Americans. Such a fituation would, with all its advantages, have alfo been attended with its concomitant flaws and deficiencies: corruption would have crept in together with excefs of wealth; pride would have created thofe odious diftinctions that render one part of the community an object of flight and indifference to the other; parties would, of courfe, have been more eafily formed in favour of an enemy, whofe maxims correfponded with the defigns of the proud and the haughty; difunion would have followed, with its conftant attendants, debility and difpiritednefs. Inftead of the manly refiftance that now did them fo much honour, the Americans would either have tamely and paffively fubmitted to whatever Britain had thought proper to prefcribe; or if fome of them, lefs funk in degeneracy than the reft, had erected the ftandard of liberty, and fummoned their countrymen to the common defence of their intereits, they would have been but feebly fupported, and muft quickly have yielded to the mean difpofition of the times, and have conformed to the ideas and temper of the majority.

Such fortunately was not the cafe of America.—It was precifely in that fituation which is moft favourable for union and defence: it confifted of a number of detached parts, which neceffity alone had united for their preiervation; they felt their refpective weaknefs while in a feparate ftate, but

ing and friendſhip grew from the ill treatment they had received, and the terrors they experienced from a common enemy.

In private life, no attachment was more laſting than that which aroſe from a participation of adverſity. Men never forgot their reciprocal willingneſs to aſſiſt each other in the day of diſtreſs; they always remembered it with a peculiar complacency; and they who had been ſincere friends on theſe trying occaſions, never after would become, or remain long foes.

In the ſame manner, thoſe alliances and aſſociations between public bodies, which were the moſt ſolid and laſting, as well as proſperous, had been concluded between nations involved in one common peril and calamity. In remoter ages, the invaſions of the Perſians, by uniting the Grecian republics, had rendered them invincible. In later periods, the Cantons of Switzerland had emerged into freedom, by being forced to ſtand by each other in oppoſing the tyranny of their ſovereigns; and the ſeven provinces compoſing the Dutch commonwealth, owed their liberty to the ſame cauſe.

Theſe illuſtrious precedents ſtood before them like ſo many invitations to America, to make one more in the catalogue of nations delivered from oppreſſion by their virtue and perſeverance. It might with the ſtricteſt truth be added, that the caſe of thoſe celebrated nations was far from being ſo favourable as their own. The two laſt had a multitude of obſtacles to contend with, from the proximity of the enemy, and the perpetual facility with which he was able to renew his attacks, and to weary out their patience, had not experience proved it unconquerable.

To theſe examples others might be added, were it neceſſary. But theſe were ſufficiently conſpicuous and ſplendid to awaken the [illegible]

to a juſt ſenſe of their condition, and to the propriety of improving the advantages that lay before them. They were evident and manifold. It was now in their power to form at once a republic which would become at the inſtant of its formation, the moſt potent and reſpectable of any now exiſting.—No iniquitous plans would concur in its eſtabliſhment; it would not be founded on bloodſhed and conqueſt, but on the very reverſe; the ſpirit of peace and unanimity. The mere willingneſs and conſent of thoſe who were to be concerned in forming it, were the only requiſites wanting to give it immediate exiſtence. It was therefore to be preſumed, that with ſo noble a proſpect before them, there would not be a diſſentient voice heard againſt ſo beneficial and honourable a propoſal.

Fortune ſeemed to have had this great work long in contemplation, and to have gradually prepared it by ſuch ways and means as ſhould render it infallible. It was now two centuries ſince ſhe firſt laid the foundation of her plan. Small were the beginnings by which it made its firſt appearance; but even then, ſuch as could look into futurity, foreſaw and foretold the future deſtiny of this immenſe continent. Founded under the auſpices of a great and mighty people, colony aroſe after colony, and ſettlements were ſpread in one continued range along its wide extended ſhores.

In the mean time, the ſeeds of that ſpirit which now animates America, were plentifully ſown every where. They were brought from a ſoil where they more vigorouſly fructified than in any other. The ſentiments, the diſpoſitions, the government of the people of whom the firſt emigrators had made a part, accompanied them to this new world. They tranſmitted them whole and entire to their deſcendants, by whom they were faithfully conveyed to the

Thus every Colony, however it might differ from others in ſome peculiar modes and forms of polity, ſtill concurred with each other in retaining the eſſentials of the Engliſh conſtitution: they knew its value, and prized it accordingly; in ſuch hands it ſuffered no contamination; and in the various modifications through which it had paſſed, its features were clear and viſible.

Hence a communion of ideas and inclinations was univerſally eſtabliſhed among all the Colonies founded by Great Britain. They were conſtitutionally one and the ſame people, though divided by the boundaries that nature has thrown between the different parts of this extended region. Whatever therefore affected any one of them in this important reſpect, equally affected all. They had before them the leſſons, and what was ſtill ſtronger, the examples of the parent ſtate, to guide and to authoriſe them in the obſervance of the maxims which its conſtitution ſo forcibly inculcated.

To the ſingular praiſe of the Americans, they had adhered to them with a fidelity which was not even found in the mother country. While a great proportion of its inhabitants was ſo infatuated by weak prejudices, as to embrace opinions contradictory to the very eſſence of this conſtitution, and even to aſſert them with their lives, America remained immoveably attached to them, and became, in this inſtance, an example to Britain.

A people ſo framed, were not to be led out of their way by deception, nor to be driven out of it by fears. They ſtood on a ground of which they too well knew the ſolidity to abandon it. No other, they were conſcious, would afford them equal ſecurity for the advantages they had ſo long enjoyed.—They had too much ſenſe to expect the continuance of them in a change of ſituation, and were poſſeſſed

When in the plenitude of conqueſt and glory, Britain began to caſt an eye of pride and haughtineſs on theſe diſtant dependencies, and to diveſt herſelf of that complacency with which ſhe had hitherto treated them, America ſtill waited with patience for a return of her benevolence. She did not avail herſelf of the improper behaviour of the parent ſtate, to caſt off a connection of which ſhe was not bound to ſuffer the continuance, whenever it became oppreſſive. It was borne, however, ten long years, in the midſt of inſults and mortifications, on the one part, and of intreaties and remonſtrances on the other. Pride, ambition, and avarice, were the motives that ſtimulated Britain in this unhappy trial of the temper of the Colonies. She had lately been uſed to ſee her enemies at her feet; ſhe had ſpread her triumphant banners, and extended her dominion through every quarter of the globe; riches poured in upon her from all parts. But in the midſt of this grandeur and proſperity, ſhe forgot that America had ſtood by her in its acquiſition. She ſeemed unwilling to admit her Colonies to a participation of her honours and emoluments, and determined to confine them to herſelf. She ſought to abridge them of thoſe benefits that reſulted from their ſituation, and to deprive them of thoſe rights that belonged equally to both, and without which no people can claim the title of Britiſh ſubjects, and can only be conſidered as the vaſſals of Britain.

But this was an appellation which the ſpirit of America would not brook. She had been taught to glory in the rank and privileges of Engliſhmen; ſhe would give up neither. She was reſolved to aſſert them, and was conſcious of her ability to do it. Britain was unfortunately of opinion, ſhe wanted both the courage and the means requiſite for that

provocations, which roused at last the resentment of America to a degree that showed she was deficient in neither.

In an evil hour did Britain think meanly of these Colonies: but the day was come which fortune had long projected for their deliverance from a situation unworthy of the greatness and importance to which they had attained. They were duly sensible of the regard that was owing to them; and had it been properly paid, never would have conceived the design of a separation. They bowed before the parent state with a respect and humility, which neither that, nor any other potentate will ever again experience. They besought Britain to recollect, that though they were her children, yet they were come to their full growth. They would assist her, they would bleed, they would die for her;—but they would not be burthened with the yoke of servitude.

There is unhappily a propensity in human nature to overload those who are willing to bear. Long had the Colonies acquiesced in restrictions of various sorts, on every branch of their external commerce, and their internal trade. Accustomed to peaceable obedience from them, Britain imagined it would have no bounds. In that imprudent expectancy, she rashly transgressed all those of moderation, and invaded those privileges of which the possession had always been left entire to the Colonists, on which the very existence of their freedom depended, and which ought therefore to have remained untouched, while Britain meant to secure them by any other tie than that of thraldom.

Such a change of conduct on the one hand, naturally produced an alteration of behaviour on the other. The bonds of friendship once broken, enmity, as usual, increased apace; but according to experience, was much greater in the aggressor than in the sufferer. America would willingly have no bounds.

reconciled; but the injury came from Britain, and and ſhe knew not how to forgive. She judged of the reſentments of America by her own; and confiding in the ſuperiority of her power, determined to cruſh an opponent whom ſhe was afraid to truſt.

Compelled to draw the ſword in her defence, ſtill America looked forward with an eye to reconciliation. But the arrogance of Britain demanded unconditional ſubmiſſion. Deſpairing of being able to ſoften the rigour of ſo unreaſonable a demand, what meaſures were the Coloniſts to take, but ſuch as the ſpirit and wiſdom of thoſe who had been in the ſame circumſtances as themſelves, pointed out as juſt and neceſſary?

But let not America repine at her fate; it was the happieſt that could befal her. If ſhe knew her own intereſt, ſhe would rejoice at the opportunity and the right jointly given her by Britain, to diſſolve a connection that muſt henceforth prove a ſource of perpetual embaraſſment. The hour was come for the Colonies alone to be connected in government, and to form an excluſive ſovereignty.

The ſtrength of America, when collected, would equally aſtoniſh and daunt her enemy. Britain relied upon the diſperſed ſituation of the people in her Colonies, and the ſmall proportion of thoſe who would take the field. She calculated the reſources of America by the rule of European politics, and fondly believed that pacific occupations would prevent the Americans from affording ſufficient numbers for the ſupport of their cauſe. But herein the leaſt attention to experience, and to the circumſtances of the Coloniſts, would have undeceived her. There are caſes wherein all men are ſoldiers: the defence of liberty and of property is the moſt intereſting of theſe caſes; it always has, and always will put arms into the hands of all thoſe who can wield them.—

for ſoldiers than in others; this is peculiarly the caſe of America; where greater multitudes ſpend their lives in the laborious buſineſs of clearing and cultivating the ground, than in any country whatever. But Britain was blinded by the impetuoſity of her reſentment, and bethought herſelf of nothing but inſtant revenge.

She now beheld, however, a union of force in America that began to alarm her. She had haſtened a determination which would have lingered many a year, unleſs it had been thus forced into completion. She had brought America to that point, at which no option remained between ſervility and independence. Could ſhe flatter herſelf that the Americans would heſitate about the choice?

Now therefore was the auſpicious moment to carry the ſyſtem of their government to perfection. With all its excellencies, it would admit of many others. Fond of their conſtitution as the Engliſh were, it had involved them in many terrible diſputes. This proved its imperfection, and ſhowed that ſome radical deficiency lurked at bottom, which unleſs eradicated, would always be productive of evils, which might be palliated, but never thoroughly cured.

To what were due the civil wars that deluged England with blood in the laſt century? Whence aroſe thoſe inteſtine feuds, that filled it with heart-burnings and animoſities, after the reſtoration of Royalty? What cauſes had brought about the Revolution? What was it, that in ſpite of theſe terrible remedies, ſtill continued to afflict the conſtitution of England, and to render its boaſted eminence highly problematic?

Theſe were queſtions which they forebore to anſwer, leſt they ſhould ſeem to aſſume the province of dictators to the reſt of mankind. But they were

ſovereigns of the world, they would venture to lodge the ſupremacy of the ſtate in thoſe from whom it proceeded. The people of America, after ſo many examples of the inconveniencies England had ſuffered under its preſent form of government, would now make trial of another.

The ſituation of America was particularly fortunate in this reſpect: ſhe could chuſe that model which appeared moſt eligible, without exciting any civil ſtrife; and ſhe lay too far off, in caſe of an erroneous choice, to be expoſed to the interference of ambitious neighbours. All ſhe had to guard againſt, was domeſtic diſſentions. But there were no individuals among them poſſeſſed of riches and influence enough to diſturb the peace of ſociety on their own private account; the only danger they had to apprehend, was from an union among the principal families. But even this was a very remote apprehenſion; there was ſo general an equality in the fortunes and circumſtances of moſt men, and ſuch a levelling diſpoſition among all, that it would be an impracticable attempt in any ſet of men, much more in a ſingle individual, to aſpire at excluſive power.

A government ſuited to the diſpoſition and wiſhes of the Americans, ſeemed, in the univerſal opinion, to be very attainable. Ambition was a vice foreign to their character; the deſire of domineering had never appeared in the moſt opulent and conſiderable among them; a kind and friendly behaviour to each other, marked all denominations of people, and placed them on a footing of neighbourlineſs, that peculiarly diſtinguiſhed them from all others.

To men of this deſcription, a government that would ſet their rulers at a great height above them, muſt prove highly unacceptable. Such a ſyſtem would pleaſe them beſt in which laws would be re-

tinctions would be avoided that were not evidently and indiſpenſibly neceſſary. It was therefore their duty to frame a conſtitution correſponding with inclinations of this kind, which were well known to be uppermoſt in the generality.

Few nations, if any, had, like the Americans, been favoured with ſo deſirable an opportunity of conſtructing a government entirely to their liking. Force, and the preſſure of circumſtances, had decided the fortune of moſt nations in this reſpect.—How careful, therefore, ought they to be in ſeizing this critical opportunity, while nothing obſtructed them, while their enemies were unable to prevent it, and while themſelves were unanimous in their endeavours to obtain it.

Were they to delay ſo ſalutary a work, difficulties might ariſe, of which they had at preſent no conception. The enemy they had to encounter would undoubtedly aſſail them with every weapon of which he was poſſeſſed. One he had of univerſal power; that was his gold. If arms were to fail him, ſtill he had that reſource. Before he tried it, he would employ the other. This was the interval to come to a reſolution among them to ſettle their affairs on ſo firm a foundation, as to fruſtrate all his attempts to overcome them by the temptation of lucre, which was in truth the only one they had to fear.

In order to effect this purpoſe beyond all danger of a defeat, nothing now remained to do, but to confirm all they had already done, and reſolve to abide by all the determinations they had taken. Theſe were the beſt preparations they could have made for the great buſineſs that was next to be tranſacted.

This buſineſs, great and important as it was, might be accompliſhed with the greateſt facility. It conſiſted in no more than a declaration of independency. In doing this, they did no more than

aſſert the plaineſt truth. Of whom were they dependant at this day, but Providence and their own ſtrength and courage.

But though this meaſure was attended with no difficulty, contrary to thoſe things that were eaſily obtained, it would be productive of a multitude of benefits. It correſponded with the wiſhes of an incomparable majority, if indeed the diminutive proportion of ſuch as might diſapprove of it, deſerved even a mention. It lifted America to the rank of a ſovereign ſtate; and impreſſed foreign nations with a reſpect much greater than that which they would, or were inclined to pay them, while they continued to acknowledge the ſovereignty of Britain. Such an acknowledgment entitled her, in ſome meaſure, to call them rebellious ſubjects; but when they had caſt off their allegiance, they would ſpeedily meet with thoſe who would recognize their independency. Even the very act of claiming it, would give them a conſideration, which is never refuſed to a brave and magnanimous people. It would procure them a reſpectful treatment even among thoſe whom the dread of diſobliging Britain kept in awe; and among ſuch as were known to be inimical to her, it would ſecure every favour that could be granted to them, without coming to an open rupture with the Britiſh Court.

A meaſure that came accompanied with ſo many advantages, ought not to be delayed. To waver and heſitate was the readieſt method to awaken the vigilance of the enemy, and to excite him to counteract it. No uncertainty ſhould be allowed to take place in ſuch a caſe; to reſolve and to execute ſhould be the ſame deed; the enemy ought to be apprized of both at once: he then would be convinced of the inutility of ſtriving to divide them;

diminution of the influence of which he deemed himſelf poſſeſſed.

To ſome this might ſeem an hazardous enterprize, full of danger, and tending to exaſperate an enemy equally vindictive and formidable, and whoſe reſources were an object no leſs of notoriety than amazement. He would exert them unqueſtionably to the utmoſt on ſo urgent an occaſion; and they might at length be found of ſuperior weight in the ſcale of compariſon with theirs.

To thoſe who argued in this manner, no other anſwer could be given, than that in all emergencies of a ſimilar nature to the preſent, to require an abſence of all peril, betrayed imbecility of mind and weakneſs of heart in the extreme. When was ſo great an object as that propoſed, ever compaſſed without difficulty and danger? Allowing both to be ever ſo preſſing and imminent, ſtill it were more imprudent and rash to fly from, than to face them: they would purſue and overtake the cowardly; the brave only ſtood a chance to overcome them. It was wiſer, therefore, at all events, to embrace reſolute meaſures: the more daring they appeared, the ſafer they were in reality: none but ſuch could poſſibly procure ſucceſs; all others led to certain deſtruction.

But the hazards at which ſome people were ſo terrified, were imaginary. Britain had already ſummoned her utmoſt ſtrength to this conteſt. Whatever further ſteps the Colonies might take to oppoſe or to irritate her, would not produce more effectual efforts againſt them, than thoſe ſhe had made: they would indeed ſhow the inflexible reſolution in thoſe who governed the American councils, to reſiſt her endeavours to the very laſt: but ſhe could not too ſoon be apprized of this intention; it might incline her to ponder on the ruinous expence attending the reduction of a people thus reſolved, the great un-

the dangers of various kinds, to which, in the mean time, ſhe would lie inevitably expoſed.

America had much more to apprehend from her internal foes, than her open enemies: of theſe ſhe knew the ſtrength, and could obſerve the motions; but the others under the maſk of friendſhip, concealed the baſeſt treachery: they made it their buſineſs to diſhearten people, by exaggerated informations of the numerouſneſs of the forces that were to be employed by Great Britain againſt the Colonies: they were continually extolling their valour, expertneſs, and diſcipline; recounting their exploits, inſinuating, in ſhort, that they would prove irreſiſtible.

But who were theſe formidable troops againſt whom Americans would not be able to ſtand? They had already withſtood the braveſt men in Britain. Was the pride of Engliſhmen ſo lowered, as to acknowledge any men braver than themſelves? Were the Heſſians, or other Germans in Britiſh pay, better ſoldiers than the natives of Britain? Were they more active and intrepid? Were they more zealous for the honour of their country? In a word, were they more completely qualified to wage war on the continent of America? Certainly not. The advantages, on the contrary, were on the ſide of the Engliſh, in a variety of conſiderations. They fought in their own cauſe, were acquainted with the people and country of America; ſpoke their language; knew their ſentiments; they had more vivacity in their diſpoſition, and would act with more expeditiouſneſs. But were the Britiſh troops ever ſo ſuperior to the German, as they had not overcome the Americans, it was neceſſary for ſuch as aimed at intimidating theſe, to repreſent the Germans as much preferable to them in point of ſoldierſhip.

If ſuch excellent troops as the Britiſh had not

apprehend from mercenaries, who came much more unwillingly to this diſtant ſcene of action, than the Engliſh themſelves. Theſe, it was well known, expreſſed reluctance enough to the ſervice they were upon. Numbers, if not the far greater majority, diſapproved of the quarrel they were engaged in, but were profeſſionally compelled to ſupport it.

While America was true to herſelf, ſhe would maintain her ground againſt all her adverſaries. Thoſe who betrayed her, were an inconſiderable number; and to be apprehended only on account of their malice and inveteracy. But if ſhe had a few traitors at home, ſhe had on the other hand ſuch numerous and powerful friends abroad, as would not fail to ſtrike a damp upon their enemies, when they beheld who they were, and with what a force they intended to ſupport the cauſe of America.

Did Britain imagine that ſhe would be left unmoleſted, to proceed at her leiſure and diſcretion againſt the Colonies? It was indeed the intereſt of the many ſecret ill wiſhers who ſurrounded her on every ſide, that ſhe ſhould indulge herſelf in this perſuaſion: they would compliment her with the faireſt aſſurances of good will, and pacific intentions, till ſhe had waſted her ſtrength, and exhauſted her finances: but the moment they ſaw her ſufficiently debilitated, they would come forth and avow their purpoſes; and employ ſuch a ſtrength in their execution, as Britain would not, in her enfeebled condition, be able to oppoſe.

Nor would the Colonies in the mean time be left unaſſiſted. Such a relinquiſhment would ill agree with the ſettled ſyſtem of European politics. They would be ſupported by indirect and clandeſtine means from various quarters: theſe would fully enable them to keep the field, and weary out the enemy. It were needleſs to enumerate thoſe parts of the world from whence help would come. It

might reaſonably be expected from every nation and potentate, to whom the greatneſs of Britain was an object of envy. Among theſe were ſome of the moſt powerful ſtates in Europe. The maritime powers, in particular, would not certainly neglect ſo favourable an opportunity to deprive her of that naval ſuperiority of which they ſtood in ſo much dread.

Theſe were powerful motives to induce the people of America to go on chearfully with the work they had begun; and to hope for a proſpetous iſſue. To theſe might be added the certainty of being abundantly ſupplied at home with able hands to perform it. It was not only in the bravery of its inhabitants, and their aptitude for war, that America had reaſon to place the higheſt confidence; their numbers were an object no leſs intereſting: the country was full of people, not only willing, but eager to act in the common defence. A ſpecimen of their readineſs was given the very firſt moment it was required: within a few hours notice, upwards of twenty thouſand aſſembled on the memorable day of Lexington.

They were not multitudes haſtily gathered, and as eaſily diſperſed: they were men ſincerely animated with the love of their country, and earneſtly deſirous to ſignalize themſelves it its cauſe. It was not from the neceſſity of procuring a livelihood, that they embraced the profeſſion of a ſoldier; they ventured their lives freely and cheerfully for the protection of all that was dear to mankind: they left comfortable homes, the ſeats of plenty and content, and ſubmitted to the hardſhips and diſtreſſes of a military life, from a far nobler proſpect than that of pay and plunder: theſe they left to their enemies, whoſe chief inducements they muſt neceſſarily be, from the character of thoſe individuals of whom their troops were compoſed; men picked up whereever they could be found, depreſſed with indi-

gence, corrupted through ſloth, or immerſed in all kind of iniquity. Such were the recruits on which Britain was to depend for the ſupply of thoſe armies that were to conquer America.

But experience had ſhown that ſuch men were not to be placed in competition with thoſe who fought in reality, for what moſt nearly intereſted them. King and country were words of courſe, employed in all monarchies for want of ſomething more ſubſtantial and ſignificant: but what were king and country to individuals, who, from their ſituation in life, could feel for neither; who, for an increaſe of wages, would abandon their party, and act againſt it without the leaſt remorſe?

Add to theſe conſiderations, that moſt of thoſe whom they were to encounter, were new levies like themſelves: the troops expected from Great Britain and Ireland, were in fact inferior to them; by far the major part had never ſeen ſervice, and numbers were freſh from the plough, the loom, and the ſhop; their equals in condition at beſt; though certainly not provided with ſuch cogent reaſons as thoſe which ought to inſpirit the Americans to acquit themſelves manfully in the approaching trial.

With ſo many inducements to look forward with the brighteſt expectations, it would be unworthy of men contending for their all, to ſuffer one moment's deſpondency. The part they were acting had raiſed them to a ſtation of conſpicuity that attracted the eyes of the whole world. Europe had fixed its entire attention on the tranſactions upon this continent, and waited with continual anxiety for the arrival of intelligence, what progreſs the Coloniſts were making. They had the wiſhes of all the brave, the learned, and the wiſe, in that moſt enlighted region of the globe. It behoved them to preſerve that eſteem and predeliction. The unanimity with which it was beſtowed, was a proof that

were not undeſerving of it. They were preciſely in the ſame poſition the valiant, though unfortunate Corſicans had been a few years before; praiſed and admired by all nations. There was indeed an eſſential difference in their own favour; the Corſicans were, from a concatenation of unhappy circumſtances, abandoned and left ſingly to ſtruggle ineffectually againſt the heavy weight that cruſhed them at laſt. But they ſtood, as it were, in the midſt of every kind of encouragement and aſſiſtance. Their own ſtrength was great and reſpectable; that of their friends ſtill more conſiderable. While Britain, their only enemy, had not a ſingle ally deſerving of the name. They who adhered to her, were needy and mercenary hirelings, of no conſideration in the ſyſtem of European affairs. They lent their troops to Britain, from the ſame motive they would lend them to any other power, pay and ſubſidy. They would withdraw them from the ſervice of Britain, and devote them to another, to its enemies if required, for a larger ſtipend.

From theſe premiſes it was inconteſtable, that no people engaged in diſpute with another, could poſſibly ſtand on more advantageous ground than the Americans. No diſcouraging circumſtances could be pointed out to alarm them: the proſpect on every ſide was clear and open: they had none but the common dangers of war to provide againſt; and they were duly prepared for them; but they had at the ſame time every reaſon to promiſe themſelves a proſperous termination of it, and the completeſt ſucceſs in the attainment of that object for which it was undertaken.

Such was the ſubſtance of the divers publications and opinions of people in America at this time. The communication of theſe ſentiments, propagated them with amazing ſpeed; among the multi-

pared for their reception. They ſpread with irreſiſtible rapidity throughout the continent; and gained ſo powerful a majority of proſelytes, that thoſe who intended to realize the ſpeculations they contained, were convinced they ſhould meet with no impediments, and would carry their ſchemes into the completeſt execution.

A declaration of independency now became the ſubject of univerſal diſcuſſion. It was mentioned as a neceſſary and indiſpenſible meaſure: thoſe who ventured to oppoſe it, thoſe even who appeared doubtful of its expediency, were looked upon with a ſuſpicious eye. No true American, it was ſaid, ought to heſitate in giving it his hearty concurrence: a denial could only proceed from ignorance or falſeheartedneſs; thoſe who were ignorant of the true intereſt of their country, deſerved no attention; and thoſe who were falſe to it, merited puniſhment.

Notwithſtanding the violence of thoſe who ſupported this meaſure, and the ſuperiority of their numbers, two reſpectable Colonies had the courage to oppoſe them. Theſe were Pennſylvania and Maryland. A great proportion of their inhabitants profeſſed a moderation of ſentiments, that did not coincide with that impetuous zeal, ſo common and prevalent in the others. They were no leſs attached to their country; but did not approve of that outrageous warmth, which bore down all coolneſs and reflexion, and precipitated all meaſures without ſufficiently pondering upon their conſequences.

The eſtabliſhmen of a new form of government, was a matter of too ſerious a nature, to meet with their immediate concurrence, eſpecially when accompanied with a total ſeparation from the parent ſtate. This, in particular, was ſtrongly diſapproved by a plurality of the Deputies to the General Aſſem-

inclined than the others to infiſt upon a redreſs of the grievances, ſo often complained of, ſtill they could not prevail upon themſelves to unite with thoſe who had reſolved to put an end to theſe complaints, by ſettling all domeſtic affairs on ſuch a plan as ſhould take them for ever out of the hands of Great Britain, and exclude it from all interference and authority over the Colonies.

To this idea the moſt impetuous and turbulent adhered with inflexible reſolution. The partizans of the oppoſite one, though numerous, being leſs warm, did not eſpouſe it with equal vehemence and activity. They ſtood in no little awe of their antagoniſts, who repreſented them as deficient in attachment to the public, and as puſillanimous and wavering. They conſidered, at the ſame time, the neceſſity of remaining united with the other Colonies: reciprocal aſſiſtance was the only ſure method of protecting them from the reſentment of Britain; and to diſſolve their union, would lay them in a manner at her feet.

In this dilemma, after maturely weighing the reſult of conſenting to an accommodation with Great Britain, or of going the lengths propoſed by the other Colonies, they found the deciſion either way ſo perplexing, that they determined to refer it to their conſtituents. They looked upon it as a queſtion, wherein the community was too deeply involved, for any but themſelves finally and perſonally to decide.

This important queſtion was agitated with great fervour on both ſides. It was argued that a ſeparation from Britain would be followed by a multiplicity of inconveniencies. They loſt their old friend and protector, united to them by conſanguinity and intereſt, who, with all his faults, had been a ſolid benefactor; and, grown wiſe by diſagreeable

of diſſatisfaction. He was the ſole umpire, in whoſe hands they could truſt the power of holding the balance among them. He was the common parent of all, and would not behave with partiality to any. Such a moderator was abſolutely requiſite for the preſervation of their internal peace, and the ſettlement of thoſe differences which ſo often aroſe among them, to the ſerious diſquietude of ſuch as foreſaw the dangerous conſequences they would probably produce, when the Colonies were increaſed in ſtrength, and might from this conſideration, become untractable in their reciprocal diſputes, and incline to uſe forcible methods of terminating them.

There were alſo various other advantages in a connection with Britain. Its power ſecured them reſpect every where; and their commerce, though ſubject to a few reſtrictions, was nearly equal to their means of exerciſing it: they had almoſt as much as they could manage; and it was always ſure, in caſe of need, of being eſſentially aſſiſted by the bounties ſo frequently and ſo generouſly beſtowed upon thoſe branches that required encouragement.

Precipitation in a caſe of ſo delicate a nature as an entire ſciſſion and diſmemberment from the main-body of ſo noble an empire as that of Britain, would be unpardonable in men who had ſo long and ſo largely experienced the benefits of an union therewith. Novelty had its charms in public, as well as in private affairs: but, as to quarrel and part with an intimate was juſtly reckoned a misfortune, it might with no leſs truth be deemed a ſerious calamity, for two branches of a nation to come to ſuch a rupture as to renounce each other for ever.

The reaſonings on the other ſide were conducted upon a different ground. Little notice was taken of the foregoing aſſertions. They

was ſaid, was the only baſis on which they could build with any ſtability; without it no advantages could be depended on; and they muſt truſt to the diſcretion and caprice of others, which was a ſtate intolerable to men of ſpirit.

An accommodation with Great Britain was impracticable:—Her terms were too imperious for the Coloniſts to ſubmit to while they were able to withſtand her. What real friend to America would propoſe to lay down their arms in preſence of ſuch a force as was coming to invade the liberties of this continent? If they expected any terms fit for freemen to accede to, they muſt treat with arms in their hands: the moment they parted with them, all was loſt.

Would any one, therefore, ſeriouſly adviſe them to conſent to ſuch a treaty as would neceſſarily deliver them up, naked and defenceleſs, into the hands of an haughty and arrogant enemy, whoſe will and pleaſure they muſt implicitly obey, on pain of what chaſtiſement he ſhould think proper to inflict?—Periſh the thought! and periſh the man who ſhould dare to avow it!

The ſeas between Great Britain and America were now covered with ſhips of war, and with tranſports filled with Britiſh troops, and with mercenaries hired for the purpoſe of ſubduing or of ravaging this continent. What ſhould this intelligence produce in men of ſenſe and courage, but an unanimous determination to ſtand by each other with fidelity and reſolution in their common defence, and by no means to truſt to the clemency of an enemy that offered no conditions?

An enemy that required them to lay down their arms, could mean them no good, and was not therefore to be truſted. But to what intent had they

verſal accord, firmly agree never to ſheath the ſword till its freedom was perfectly ſecured?—Was this the manner ſo ſacred an engagement was to be performed? What a contemptible figure would they make in the eyes of all nations, and eſpecially of their enemies, if after ſo ſolemn and deliberate a compact, they ſhould meanly recede from it, on the bare rumour of the enemy's approach, without even having dared to riſk a ſingle trial of ſpirit and ſkill with him?

Whence could proceed ſo unaccountable a dread of an enemy not more formidable than him they had already encountered, and found themſelves able to reſiſt? His numbers were indeed increaſed, but theirs were not diminiſhed; and their capacity to face him was augmented by the experience of a long and ſevere campaign, during which they had acquired a ſufficiency of knowledge to diſcover, that meer diſcipline is not the only requiſite to ſecure ſucceſs in war.

It was clear, therefore, that no ſafety could accrue to them from any other meaſure than reſiſtance. It had hitherto anſwered their intentions more fully than moſt of them had expected. It was reaſonable then to hope, that by perſevering in the ſame track, they would continue to proſper in the ſame manner, and would bring the enemy to treat them with leſs haughtineſs.

But if they meant to reſiſt effectually, they muſt adopt another ſyſtem than that which they now purſued. It was involved in doubt and obſcurity.—They were oppoſing Great Britain with all their might, and they ſtill acknowledged themſelves her ſubjects. Was this conſiſtent with the end they propoſed, which was an entire redreſs of all grievances, and a perfect enjoyment of liberty? How could either be obtained, while Britain refuſed even to

mained in her allegiance? Was it not perceptible that ſuch a ſituation tended to throw their affairs into confuſion, and to weaken that ſpirit which held them together? Their reſolution aroſe from their unanimity; but this would not laſt, unleſs people knew the ground they ſtood upon.

They acted at preſent on no fixed principle; they had choſen rulers, and had agreed to abide by their directions; but both they and their rulers profeſſed a dependence on a ſuperior, whoſe authority however they would not ſubmit to. Such a conflict of power on the one hand, and of undenied claims on the other, would certainly, while theſe laſted, confuſe the minds of men, and render them wavering and undetermined on which ſide of the queſtion to range themſelves.

In ſuch a ſtate of indeciſion America could not remain with ſafety. It would perplex her councils, unhinge her plans, and break her ſpirit. She had aſſumed ſovereignty, and was fearful to avow it.—This was, in ſome meaſure, confeſſing herſelf either incapable or unworthy of it. People would not fail to be of this opinion. If ſhe continued in this fluctuating ſituation, her officers and generals would abate of their deference and reſpect, her ſoldiers of their zeal and confidence, and all the community of its attachment to the cauſe in contention: ſuch would inevitably be the conſequences of it at home; while thoſe Princes and States abroad, that had formed ideas of connection with them, would abandon all thoughts of that tendency, and reſign them to the calamities that muſt enſue from the adoption of ſo weak and heartleſs a conduct.

Scrupulous and feeble minds were apt to ſtartle at the propoſal of caſting off all obedience to the parent ſtate; but theſe ſhould be told, that where protection is refuſed, obedience is no longer due;

and that where oppreſſion is exerciſed, reſiſtance is no rebellion.

Britain began the conteſt, not America: this latter proffered the terms of reconciliation on which ſhe would conſent to remain united as heretofore; the former refuſed to accept of them. Who was now to decide between two people, each of whom inſiſted upon the propriety and juſtice of their demands.

In caſes of this nature, it behoved men to proceed with great deliberation in giving a verdict for either of the parties. Much more might be ſaid however in favour of America, than of Great Britain. True it was, they were both equally determined to ſupport their pretenſions by force of arms. But here it ought to be conſidered, that the firſt acted on the defenſive. This alone was a plea of ſufficient weight to authoriſe her having recourſe to ſuch a meaſure: but the ſecond had nothing to plead in juſtification of ſo terrible a method of enforcing her claims, but the perſuaſion that they were juſtly founded, which was the very point in litigation.

Here then was Great Britain aſſerting from the other extremity of the globe, her juriſdiction over America, and threatening ruin and extermination, in caſe her claims were not recogniſed in their fulleſt extent. Here ſtood America, in anxious ſuſpenſe how to act, willing to avert the evils denounced againſt her by every reaſonable conceſſion, and yet utterly averſe to yield to terms of diſhonour and humiliation.

In this perilous ſituation, the queſtion was, whether America thought herſelf poſſeſſed of ſufficient ſtrength to reſiſt the force that Britain was ſending to execute her menaces; and if ſuch were her perſuaſion, what were the propereſt means to render

The right of ſelf-defence was clear; the manner of conducting it was therefore to be adapted to the end propoſed. Now it was evident, by the reaſonings which had been adduced, that the end would never be attained, unleſs a total alteration took place in the maxims and objects of their politics.—While their meaſures were made ſubſervient to the idea of re-union with Great Britain, the ſtrength of America would never be put forth with due vigour; and it was much to be apprehended the conteſt would have an unfavourable iſſue. Why then ſhould they delay the only meaſure that could bring them out of it with credit, and ſecure to them thoſe advantages, to obtain which ſo much blood would be ſpilt in vain, unleſs they reſolved to embrace it?

This indiſpenſible, this only meaſure to ſave them from deſtruction, was to diſſolve the union with Britain, and to declare America a free and independent State. By ſuch a declaration, a change would be effected in the minds of men, that would inſtantly give an entire turn to the face of their affairs. The people would aſſume ſuch ideas of their importance and rank in the political world, as would ſtimulate them to greater exertions than ever. Individuals employed in the ſervice of the ſtate, would conceive higher notions of thoſe who were at the head of public affairs, and would obey their commanders with more diligence and alacrity. The commanders would look upon themſelves as inveſted with powers derived from ſupreme authority; and would exerciſe them with more firmneſs and deciſion. There would be no pretence for heſitation and doubt in the execution of orders; obedience would be properly enforced, and acquieſcence in all claſſes would become an obligation. Theſe, and many other advantages, would reſult from ſuch a meaſure at home.

their proceedings, and a willingneſs to hearken to any propoſals for a connection with them.

If any people felt a repugnance to ſuch a meaſure, let them reflect, that herein America did no more than imitate Britain. She had caſt the Colonies out of her protection; what was this but an abdication of all government over them? Abandoned in this manner, were they not authoriſed to look to their own ſafety? Were they not bound by the firſt of all duties, to provide for the welfare and preſervation of that community which they compoſed?

Such were the arguments alledged on both ſides of this important queſtion. That which inclined to independency, carried it by a ſtrong majority. It was determined by the people at large, that their Delegates ſhould abide by the deciſion of Congreſs.

In the Province of Maryland, there was no leſs an oppoſition to independency than in Pennſylvania. Out of eleven counties, ſeven directed their Deputies in Congreſs to vote againſt it. They obeyed accordingly, and quitted that aſſembly. But ſuch was the general reſentment and indignation of the other Colonies, that the people of Maryland ſeriouſly reflecting on the danger of being diſunited from thoſe who ſurrounded them on every ſide, and who began already to mix threats with their reproaches, judged it neceſſary to alter their conduct. They commiſſioned their Deputies to return to the Congreſs, and to coincide with any meaſure which they might deem expedient. Thus authoriſed, they reſumed their ſeats, and gave their conſent to that long expected determination.

The fourth of July, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-ſix, was the memorable day on which the Thirteen United Colonies declared themſelves FREE and INDEPENDENT STATES, and abjured their allegiance to the Crown and ſovereignty of Great

The Manifeſto they publiſhed in vindication of this meaſure, contained a very circumſtantial enumeration of the cauſes and reaſons that induced them to take it; and exhibited at the ſame time a ſtrong repreſentation of the temper, ideas, and maxims, that were uppermoſt among thoſe who influenced the affairs of America at that period.

" When in the courſe of human events," ſaid they, " it becomes neceſſary for one people to diſ-
" ſolve the political bands which have connected
" them with another, and to aſſume among the
" powers of the earth, the ſeparate and equal
" ſtation to which the laws of Nature, and Na-
" ture's God entitle them, a decent reſpect to the
" opinions of mankind, requires that they ſhould
" declare the cauſes which impel them to a ſepa-
" ration.

" We hold theſe truths to be ſelf-evident, that
" all men are created equal; that they are endow-
" ed by their Creator with certain unalienable
" rights; that among theſe are life, liberty, and
" the purſuit of happineſs: that to ſecure theſe
" rights, governments are inſtituted among men,
" deriving their juſt powers from the conſent of the
" governed; and whenever any form of government
" becomes deſtructive of theſe ends, it is the right
" of the people to alter, or to aboliſh it, and to in-
" ſtitute a new government, laying its foundation
" on ſuch principles, and organiſing its powers in
" ſuch form, as to them ſhall ſeem moſt likely to
" effect their ſafety and happineſs. Prudence, in-
" deed, will dictate, that governments long eſtab-
" liſhed ſhould not be changed for light and tran-
" ſient cauſes; and accordingly all experience has
" ſhown, that mankind are more diſpoſed to ſuf-
" fer, while evils are ſufferable, than to right them-
" ſelves by aboliſhing the forms to which they are
" accuſtomed. But when a long train of abuſes

" and uſurpations, purſuing invariably the ſame
" object, evinces a deſign to reduce them under
" abſolute deſpotiſm, it is their right, it is their
" duty to throw off ſuch government, and to pro-
" vide new guards for their future ſecurity. Such
" has been the patient ſufferance of theſe Colonies;
" and ſuch is now the neceſſity which conſtrains
" them to alter their former ſyſtems of govern-
" ment."

The Declaration next proceeds to repreſent the treatment of the Colonies to have been a ſeries of
" injuries and uſurpations, all having in direct ob-
" ject the eſtabliſhment of an abſolute tyranny."

It then entered into a ſpecification of grievances, and complained that aſſent had been refuſed to laws neceſſary for the public good.

Governors had been forbidden to paſs laws of immediate and preſſing importance, unleſs ſuſpended in their operation, till aſſented to in Britain; and that when ſuſpended in this manner, no attention had been paid to them.

Aſſent had been refuſed to other laws for the accommodation of large diſtricts of people, unleſs thoſe people would relinquiſh the rights of repreſentation in the legiſlature.

Legiſlative bodies had been called together at places unuſual, uncomfortable, and diſtant from the depoſitory of their public records, for the ſole purpoſe of fatiguing them into compliance with miniſterial meaſures.

Houſes of Repreſentatives had been diſſolved repeatedly, for oppoſing with manly firmneſs invaſions on the rights of the people.

It had for a long time after ſuch diſſolution, been refuſed to permit others to be elected; whereby the legiſlative powers, being incapable of annihilation, had returned to the people at large for their

poſed to all the dangers of invaſion from without, and convulſions within.

Endeavours had been made to prevent the population of the Colonies, by obſtructing the laws for naturalization of foteigners, refuſing to paſs others to encourage their migration thither, and raiſing the conditions of new appropriations of land.

The adminiſtration of juſtice had been obſtructed by the refuſing of aſſent to laws for eſtabliſhing judiciary powers.

Judges had been made dependent on the crown for the tenure of their offices; and the amount and payment of their ſalaries.

A multitude of new offices had been erected, and ſwarms of officers ſent to America to harraſs the people.

Standing armies had been kept among them in times of peace, without conſent of their legiſlatures.

The military had been rendered independent of, and ſuperior to the civil power.

A plan had been formed to ſubject the Colonies to a juriſdiction foreign to their conſtitution, and unacknowledged by their laws.

Acts had been paſſed by the Britiſh legiſlature, for protecting, by a mock trial, the troops quartered among them from puniſhment, for any murders which they ſhould commit on the inhabitants of the Colonies,

For cutting off their trade with all parts of the world,

For impoſing taxes on them without their conſent,

For depriving them, in many caſes, of the benefit of trial by jury,

For tranſporting them beyond ſeas, to be tried for pretended offences,

For abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into the English Colonies,

For taking away their charters, abolishing their most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of their governments,

For suspending the legislatures of the Colonies, and declaring the British Parliament invested with power to legislate for them in all cases whatsoever.

The Crown of Great Britain had abdicated the government of the Colonies, by declaring them out of its protection, and waging war against them.

Their seas had, in consequence, been plundered, their coasts ravaged, their towns burnt, the lives of their people lost.

Armies of foreign mercenaries had been hired to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, throughout the Colonies.

Their fellow citizens, taken on the high seas, had been constrained to bear arms against their country.

Domestic insurrections had been excited among them, and endeavours had been used to bring upon the inhabitants of their back settlements, the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions they had petitioned for redress in the most humble terms; but their repeated supplications had been answered only by repeated injury.

Nor had they been wanting in attention to their British brethren. They had warned them, from time to time, of attempts made by their legislature to

nies. They had reminded them of the circumſtances of their emigration, and ſettlement in this part of the world; they had appealed to their native juſtice and magnanimity, and conjured them, by the ties of their common kindred, to diſavow thoſe uſurpations, as they would inevitably interrupt the connection and correſpondence between both people; but they too had been deaf to the voice of juſtice and conſanguinity.

From theſe cauſes they judged it neceſſary to determine upon a ſeparation from the people of Britain; and to hold them as they held the reſt of mankind,—"Enemies in war, in peace friends."

"We, therefore," concluded they, "the repreſentatives of the United States of America, in General Congreſs Aſſembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by the authority of the good people of theſe Colonies, ſolemnly publiſh and declare, that theſe United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, Free and Independent States; and that they are abſolved from all allegiance to the Britiſh crown, and that all political connection between them and the ſtate of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally diſſolved; and that, as Free and Independent States, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, eſtabliſh commerce, and to do all other acts and things, which independent ſtates may of right do.—And for the ſupport of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our ſacred honour."

Such was the celebrated declaration of Independency, of which ſo much has been ſaid and written. It was received by the people of America as a faultleſs piece, containing truths and aſſertions of which

affairs of America, could entertain the leaſt doubt. The grievances which it ſpecified, were looked upon throughout the Colonies as intolerable to men of ſpirit, and ſuch as none would ſubmit to, that were not in a condition entirely helpleſs, and deſtitute of all means of redreſs. Poſſeſſing theſe, they would have thought themſelves deſerving of the moſt contemptuous treatment, if they had heſitated in doing themſelves juſtice, after it had been ſo repeatedly refuſed them by thoſe, from whom they had the fulleſt right to expect it; and who, as the authors of the injuries they had ſuſtained, ought to have prevented them from having recourſe to ſo deſperate a remedy, by applying thoſe in due time, for which the Colonies had ſo often petitioned. Such were the ſentiments of the Americans.

That the people of America ſhould have received this declaration with univerſal approbation and applauſe, was no ways ſurprizing. But what was truly a ſubject of amazement, was the univerſal aſſent and praiſe which it met with in all parts of Europe. This could only proceed from that ſpirit of invidiouſneſs and malevolence, which was exerting itſelf every where to the prejudice of Great Britain. Its conduct reſpecting the Colonies, was not a ſubject of which the ſtates and people on the European continent were competent to judge. The fact was, that whatever it had been, they would have equally condemned it, from the diſpoſition they were in to favour and forward whatever could detriment this country.

CHA

CHAP. XXI.

Lord and General Howe appointed Commiſſioners and Commanders in Chief in America, by ſea and land.— Operations of the Britiſh fleet and army under them.

1776.

AFTER this formal renunciation of their allegiance to Great Britain, and erecting themſelves into an independent ſovereignty, it behoved the people of America to call forth all their ſtrength and abilities, in order to ſupport effectually ſo reſolute a meaſure.

Hitherto their affairs had proſpered beyond the moſt ſanguine expectations of the wiſeſt amongſt them. The expedition into Canada excepted, they had ſucceeded in every enterprize they had formed; and had completely fruſtrated every attempt that had been concerted againſt them.

Their force at ſea, though not conſiſting of large ſhips, was truly formidable from their numbers, and the captures they were continually making. They diſtreſſed the trade of Great Britain in every latitude; the Weſt Indies ſwarmed with them; on the coaſt of America hardly any veſſels could eſcape them, that did not ſail under convoy. They infeſted the Mediterranean; they ventured even into the Bay of Biſcay, and the neighbourhood of the Britiſh Channel.

Beſide the great number of privateers fitted out at the expence of individuals, a conſiderable proportion of ſtout veſſels, well equipped, and manned with excellent ſailors, and expert commanders, were in the immediate pay of the Congreſs itſelf. A certain ſhare of the prizes they took

priated to the public; the remainder was diſtributed among the captors.

At land nothing had been omitted to put every acceſſible place in a poſture of defence: batteries were erected at all the uſual and commodious landings along the coaſt: forts had been conſtructed in every ſituation that required them. The forces in the field, and in immediate readineſs for ſervice, were exceedingly numerous, and well diſciplined. They amounted, at the time of the declaration of independency, to upwards of fourſcore thouſand men.

It was the general opinion of the European nations, that Great Britain, notwithſtanding its vaſt naval ſuperiority, and the regular armies it was about to ſend againſt America, would not be able to furniſh a ſufficient ſtrength for the variety and complicatedneſs of military operations that would be required. It would be neceſſary to carry on ſeveral at the ſame time, in order to make a forcible impreſſion on the Americans. Their diſpoſitions for defence were ſuch, that if they were not aſſailed effectually in many places at once, they would, by protracting the war, weary out and conſume the Britiſh troops merely by ſkirmiſhes and partial engagements, and by harraſſing them in that multiplicity of ways they would have it in their power to do, from the nature of their country, and the advantage of fighting upon their own ground. Here they would find an infinity of reſources at hand, while thoſe of the enemy would be extremely precarious, from their prodigious diſtance, and the time that would be loſt in waiting for them.

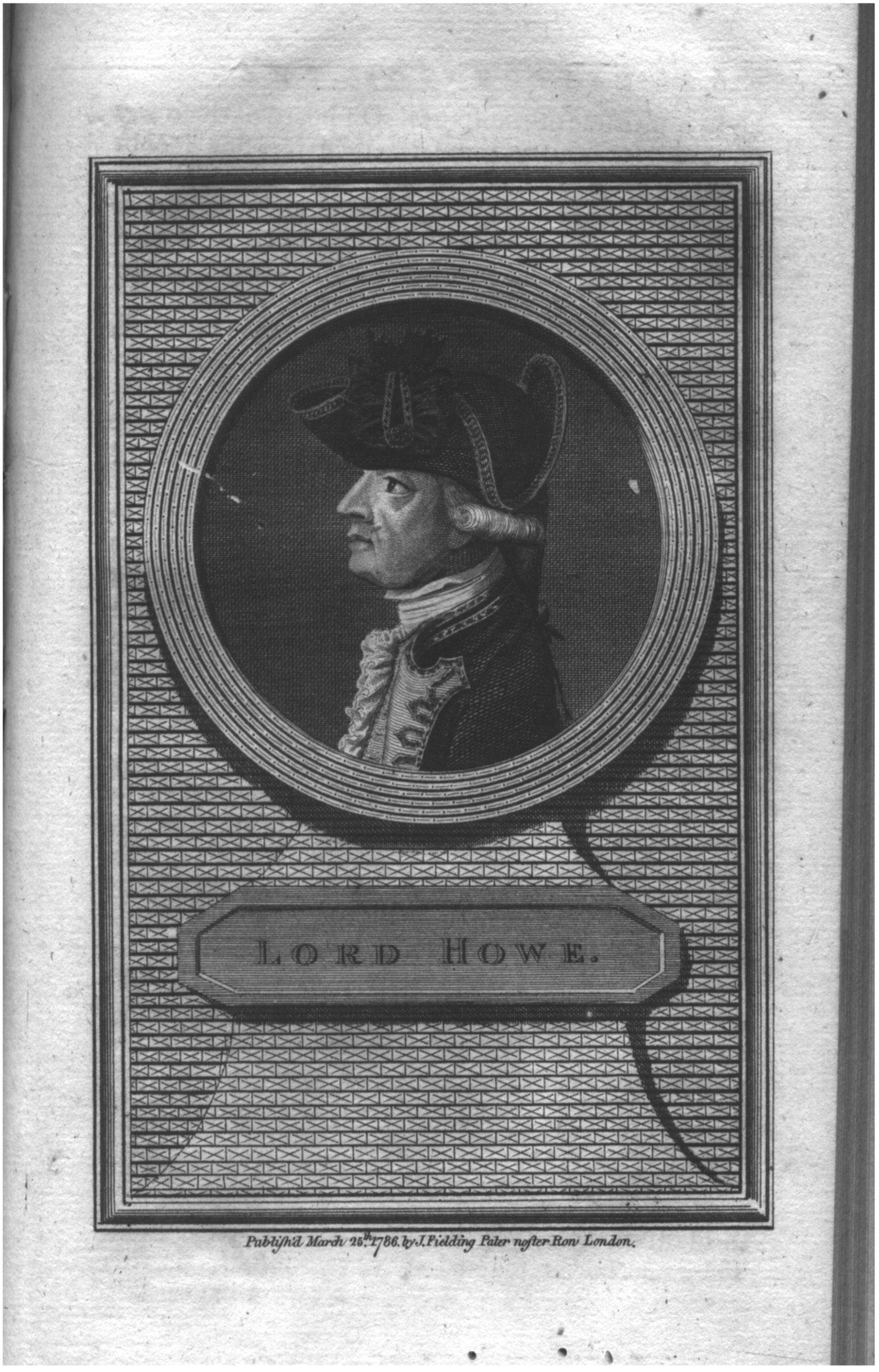
The great ſtrength of the Britiſh armament, on the other hand, was, by many good judges, eſteemed capable of producing all the effects for which it was deſigned. It conſiſted of ſix ſhips of the line, and near thirty frigates, beſides other armed veſſels

and a multitude of tranſports. On board of theſe was an army of thirty thouſand men, as fine troops as any in Europe, furniſhed abundantly with all manner of warlike neceſſaries. Such an army had never yet been ſeen in this hemiſphere; and Great Britain alone was able to ſend and ſupport ſo vaſt a force at ſuch a diſtance.

It was under the command of Lord Howe, as Admiral, and of his brother as General, both officers of eminent merit in their reſpective departments, and who poſſeſſed, in a high degree, the confidence and eſteem of the nation, on account of their perſonal ſervices, and the character of intrepidity inherent in their family.

The Province of New York, from its central ſituation, was fixed upon as the propereſt for the commencement of military operations. As moſt parts of it were acceſſible by ſea, it was not doubted the poſſeſſion of it would be eaſily obtained. No ſituation could be more favourable for the motions of either the fleet or the army: hoſtilities could be carried on with equal ſpeed and convenience to the troops employed in them, either in Connecticut or the Jerſeys, or in the interior parts of New York. The ſubjugation of the firſt, would open the way to Maſſachuſet; of the ſecond to Pennſylvania, and of the third to the country between them and Canada. By theſe means the communication would be cut off between the north and ſouth Colonies, and a junction would be formed with the forces under the command of General Carlton. Could ſuch a plan be carried into execution, it would, in all probability, decide the fate of America in one ſingle campaign.

It was with the utmoſt chearfulneſs the officers and ſoldiers of the army that had gone from Boſton to Halifax, were apprized of their new deſtination.


LORD HOWE.
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diſagreeable climate, confined to the tranſports for want of quarters to accommodate them aſhore, and without a ſufficiency of thoſe refreſhments of which they ſtood ſo much in need.

As the ſeaſon for action had been long begun, General Howe grew impatient of delay, and reſolved to quit Halifax with the force he had, and proceed to New York, purpoſing there to wait the arrival of the reinforcements that were now on their way from England. He ſailed accordingly about the middle of June, and at the end of the month arrived at Sandy Hook, a point of land that ſtands at the entrance into that great body of water, which is ſurrounded by New York, Staten, and Long Iſland, and is formed by the confluence of ſeveral rivers.

The Americans, who had long expected him, had fortified every place that was acceſſible on the iſland where the city of New York ſtands. It was garriſoned with an army; and provided with a numerous artillery, and every requiſite for a vigorous defence. Long Iſland was alſo well guarded, and a large body of troops lay encamped at the moſt convenient landing-place.

As the reinforcements were daily expected, it was judged moſt prudent to undertake no deſcent at either of theſe iſlands till they were arrived. The troops were landed at Staten Iſland, lying oppoſite to the former, where many of the inhabitants joined them.

On the arrival of Lord Howe about the middle of July, a circular letter was ſent by him to the ſeveral Governors who had been lately diſpoſſeſſed of their authority by their reſpective Provinces, informing them of the commiſſion he had received, and directing them to make as public as poſſible a Declaration accompanying the letter. Herein he made known the powers he was inveſted with by the legiſlature of Great Britain, in conjunction with his brother, of granting general, or particular pardons,

to all thoſe who in the preſent confuſions and diſturbances, might have departed from their allegiance, and were now willing to return to their duty; and of declaring any colony, town, or diſtrict, to be in the King's peace; by which they would avoid the penalties they had incurred. It promiſed at the ſame time, that the ſervices of thoſe who contributed to the re-eſtabliſhment of public tranquility, ſhould meet with due conſideration.

This letter and declaration were printed by order of the Congreſs in all the news-papers, with a prefatory advertiſement that they were thus made public, in order to let the people of the United States know the nature of the powers with which the Commiſſioners were inveſted, and the terms with the expectation of which the Britiſh miniſtry had ſought to amuſe and to diſarm them; that thoſe who had ſtill relied upon the juſtice and moderation of Britain, might now be convinced that they muſt truſt to their valour alone for the preſervation of their liberties.

In the mean time a letter was ſent by Lord Howe to General Waſhington, to be delivered to him under the ſuperſcription of George Waſhington, Eſq. But the General refuſed to receive it, as not being directed to him with the title and in the ſtile ſuitable to his ſtation. His conduct in this inſtance was particularly applauded by the Congreſs; and they ordained that in future none of their officers ſhould receive letters or meſſages that were not addreſſed to them according to their reſpective rank.

In order to obviate this difficulty, Adjutant-General Paterſon was ſent by General Howe, with a letter directed to "George Waſhington, &c. &c. &c." His reception was extremely polite; upon his aſking for the General, he was immediately admitted, and the uſual formality of blind-folding was diſpenſed with, as a peculiar mark of reſpect. The Gene-

ral received him in great form and dignity. The Adjutant expreſſed much concern in the behalf of his principals, on account of the difficulties that had ariſen from the ſuperſcription of the letter; aſſured him of their high regard and eſteem for his perſonal character, and that they had no intention to undervalue his rank. It was hoped therefore that the *et ceteras* would remove all obſtructions to their mutual intercourſe.

The General's anſwer was, that a letter written to a perſon inveſted with a public character, ſhould ſpecify it; otherwiſe it could not be diſtinguiſhed from a letter on private buſineſs: true it was, the *et ceteras* implied every thing; but it was no leſs true, that they implied any thing. He could not, conſiſtently with his character, receive any letter relating to public affairs, that ſhould be directed to him, without a deſignation of his rank and office.

It was obſerved, in the courſe of converſation, by the Adjutant, that the powers entruſted to the Commiſſioners were very extenſive; that they were ready to exert themſelves to the utmoſt, in order to bring about a reconciliation; and that he hoped the General would conſider this viſit as a firſt ſtep towards it. The General replied, that it did not appear that theſe powers conſiſted in any more than in granting pardons; but America not having committed any offence, aſked for no forgiveneſs, and was only defending her unqueſtionable rights.

Thus ended a conference, from which it became evident, that all attempts in the ſame line would prove ineffectual at preſent; and that nothing ſhort of a decided ſuperiority in the field, would induce the Americans to relax of the reſolutions they had taken ſo unanimouſly, and with ſo much deliberation and ſolemnity.

The arrival of the fleet and army in the neighbourhood of New York, had made an impreſſion on

the Congreſs: they continued with the ſame inflexibility in the purſuit of the meaſures they had framed, executing them with great firmneſs, and puniſhing with ſeverity all who oppoſed them.

Some time before the arrival of this armament, meaſures had been concerted for an inſurrection at New York and Albany, the latter place eſpecially, in favour of the Britiſh government. The expectations formed by the inſurgents of being effectually ſupported by the Britiſh forces, then daily expected, induced them to this meaſure; but they were diſcovered: ſome were executed, others impriſoned; numbers who had fled from their houſes, were treated as outlaws; and the eſtates of all thoſe againſt whom proofs could be found, were confiſcated.

Such alterations were now taking place in every Province, as were judged beſt adapted to the republican ſyſtem eſtabliſhed by the declaration of independency. They acted herein with a boldneſs and confidence the more ſurpriſing, as the great force intended againſt them was daily increaſing by arrivals from Britain. But the firmneſs of the Congreſs had inſpired them with univerſal emulation. It was in the very face of this fleet and army, and while the firſt was caſting anchor in ſight of New York, and the ſecond landing on Staten Iſland, that reſolute body had declared America independent.

It was far in the month of Auguſt before the Britiſh forces could be collected. As ſoon as they were poſſeſſed of a ſufficient ſtrength, the commanders reſolved to make an attempt upon Long Iſland, which lay more open to an attack than New York. Its ſpaciouſneſs afforded better ſcope to the operations of an army, and it would furniſh plenty of proviſions.

Preparations being made by the fleet to cover the deſcent of the army, it effected a landing, unoppo-

Aug. 22, 1776, fed, between two ſmall towns, called Utrecht and Graveſend, on the neareſt ſhore to Staten Iſland. General Putnam lay encamped at a ſmall diſtance with a numerous body, at a place called Brookland, on the northern ſhore. His camp was on a peninſula, the whole breadth of which was fortified. The Eaſt River, ſeparating him from New York, was on his left; a marſh, extending to the water-ſide, on his right; and behind him was the bay. A range of hills, covered with woods, ſeparated the Britiſh and Provincial armies. The road to the enemy lay through a village called Flat Buſh: here began the aſcent to the hills, and near it was the principal paſs over them.

General Putnam ordered large detachments to occupy the hills and paſſes. The center of the Britiſh army, compoſed of the Heſſians, took poſt at Flat Buſh; the left was under General Grant, near the ſea ſhore; and the right, conſiſting of the major part of the Britiſh troops, was under General Clinton, and Lords Percy and Cornwallis.

On the twenty-ſixth, towards evening, General Clinton, with the van of that part of the army, moved from Flat Buſh acroſs a large extent of country, and ſeized upon a paſs in the hills of the utmoſt importance, which had been neglected by the enemy. The road being thus cleared, the main body, which followed cloſe under Lord Percy, croſſed the hills without moleſtation, and deſcended into a low and level country, that lay oppoſite to General Putnam's lines.

Early in the morning of the twenty-ſeventh, the engagement was begun at Flat Buſh, by the Heſſians, under General Heiſter, and towards the water ſide by General Grant; and a heavy fire of cannon and muſketry continued with equal vigour on both ſides during ſeveral hours. The ſhips in the mean

my, which extended towards the water ſide, and was engaged with General Grant, in order to diſtract their attention from their left and rear, againſt which the principal attack was intended. Thoſe who were engaged with the Heſſians, firſt diſcovered the danger they were expoſed to from the movements made by the Britiſh troops under General Clinton, and began immediately to retreat towards their camp; but they were incercepted by them, and forced back into the woods, where they met again with the Heſſians. Surrounded and overpowered with numbers, they had no other reſource left, than to break through them: this ſome were ſo fortunate as to effect; but many were cut to pieces in attempting it: others eſcaped through the woods, where numbers alſo were killed or taken.

Their right, which was engaged with General Grant, was too late apprized of the misfortune which had befallen their left and center, to provide for their own ſafety in due time. Their retreat was cut off by a body of Britiſh troops, which had occupied the ground on their rear, and who now fell upon them with great fury. Some of them took ſhelter in the woods; the greater number endeavoured to make their way through a marſh that lay between them and their lines; but here many were drowned or periſhed in the mud.

The victory was total and complete. Their loſs, it has been aſſerted, amounted to between three and four thouſand; of which more than two thouſand were ſlain in the battle and purſuit. Their behaviour did them no diſcredit; while any hopes remained, they ſtood their ground with courage; and when a retreat became neceſſary, they ſhowed no leſs ſpirit in their endeavours to effect it.

Among thoſe Americans who fell on this day, a regiment from Maryland was particularly regretted.

lies in that Province. They behaved with aſtoniſhing intrepidity, and were every one killed or wounded.

This was the greateſt blow the Americans had yet received. The loſs they ſuſtained in the field, though great, did not equal that depreſſion of mind they underwent in conſequence of it; and which outweighs all other calamities in a conteſt of this nature. What aggravated it ſtill more, it followed directly the proclamation of independency. By the enemies to their cauſe, it was repreſented as a puniſhment; and to the weak-minded it appeared as a ſiniſter omen.

They loſt, in this action, ſome of their beſt officers and braveſt ſoldiers. The body under General Putnam was compoſed of ſelected troops; and thoſe which took poſſeſſion of the hills were the choiceſt, conſiſting chiefly of markſmen. Had not the paſs been diſcovered, which opened the way for the Britiſh troops to croſs the hills, and aſſail them in the rear, they had no doubt of being able, from the advantage of their poſition, to have maintained their ground ſucceſsfully.

Great valour and activity were diſplayed on this occaſion by the Britiſh troops. They had long wiſhed for an opportunity of meeting the Provincials on open ground. They found it; and it behoved them to improve it to their honour. They were conſcious it was at ſtake. Had they not been victorious, with the advantages they had ſought and obtained, their reputation would have ſuffered a ſtain, which would not have eaſily been effaced.

So impetuous was their ardour, that the eagerneſs of their purſuit could hardly be reſtrained by the orders of their Generals: they followed the enemy cloſe up to their lines, and would have aſſaulted them directly; but the certitude of carrying them without loſs by a regular attack, prevented an indulgence of

this warmth, which muſt undoubtedly, however ſucceſsful, have been attended with no ſmall effuſion of blood. The Provincials were ſtill not leſs than fifteen thouſand ſtrong; and would, if compelled to a conflict that muſt have proved ſo critical and deciſive, have probably made a moſt deſperate defence.

The conduct and military ſkill exhibited throughout the operations of this day, were highly applauded by all judges, as well as the diligence and exactneſs with which every commanding officer acquitted himſelf in the execution of his reſpective orders.

This victory was purchaſed, when the importance of it is conſidered, at a very cheap rate. The killed and wounded in the Britiſh army, did not exceed three hundreed and eighteen; of whom only ſixty one were ſlain. Eleven hundred of the enemy were taken, among whom were three Generals.

The Britiſh army encamped that very evening in front of the enemies lines, and the next day began to make preparations for a formal attack. But the Provincials, upon examination, appeared ſo diminiſhed by this defeat, that their officers thought it would be imprudent to venture a defence of their camp, unleſs it were aſſaulted before they could make a retreat.

General Waſhington himſelf, though a man of a fearleſs diſpoſition, and not apt to deſpond in the worſt of times, did not think it proper to riſk a ſecond action, till the firſt impreſſions of that which was juſt terminated to their diſadvantage had ſubſided. He had croſſed over from New York in the height of the engagement, but too late to retrieve the fortune of the day. He had the mortification of ſeeing ſome of his beſt troops ſlaughtered or taken, without being able to afford them any aſſiſt-

ſave thoſe that remained. He was well convinced that an army ſo numerous, provided with ſuch an artillery, compoſed of ſuch excellent ſoldiers, and elated with victory, could hardly be withſtood at the preſent moment. New York required to be ſtrengthened, and no time was to be loſt in withdrawing to that place. Were the wind to permit the Britiſh ſquadron to ſtation itſelf between the camp and that city, all might inevitably be loſt: ſhould the troops on Long Iſland be defeated, the remainder of the Continental army might be ſo diſcouraged, as to loſe all hope, and no longer dare to face the enemy. A retreat was therefore indiſpenſible; but this too was become a matter of difficulty, from the poſition of the Britiſh army, inveſting their works, and watching all their motions.

In this extremity of danger, General Waſhington exerted himſelf with that vigilance and circumſpection that peculiarly characteriſed him. During the night of the twenty-ninth of Auguſt, favoured by obſcurity, and in the profoundeſt ſilence, he withdrew from his camp, and conveyed his troops to the adjacent ferry, with their baggage, and as much of their military ſtores and artillery as could conveniently be carried off. Here they embarked, and landed ſafely on the oppoſite ſhore. This retreat was conducted with ſo much order and ſecrecy, that it was not diſcovered till the next morning, when the Britiſh troops took poſſeſſion of the camp and artillery abandoned by the enemy.

A few days after this evacuation of Long Iſland, General Sullivan, who had been made a priſoner in the late action, was ſent by Lord Howe to the Congreſs with a meſſage, importing that though he could not conſiſtently treat with that aſſembly in the character they had aſſumed, yet he would gladly confer with ſome of their members in their private

capacity, and would meet them at any place they would appoint. He informed them, that he was empowered, with the General, to terminate the conteſt between Great Britain and her Colonies in a manner acceptable to both. He expreſſed an earneſt deſire that a ſettlement might take place before the events of war became ſo deciſive as to render it no longer a matter of choice for one of the parties to treat. Were the Congreſs inclined to enter into an agreement, much might be granted to them which they had not required. Should the conference produce the probability of an accommodation, the authority of Congreſs would be acknowledged, in order to render the treaty valid and complete in every reſpect.

The anſwer to this meſſage was, that the Congreſs of the free and independent States of America, could not, conſiſtently with the truſt repoſed in them, ſend any of their members to confer with him in a private capacity. But that in order to evince how deſirous they were to reſtore peace and amity upon equitable conditions, they would depute a committee of their body to learn whether he was authoriſed to treat with perſons commiſſioned by the Congreſs for that purpoſe, and what propoſals he had to offer.

The committee appointed for this buſineſs, conſiſted of Doctor Franklin, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Rutledge, who waited upon Lord Howe at Staten Iſland, where they were received and entertained with great civility and reſpect.

The conference was opened by Lord Howe's acquainting them, that though he could not treat with them as a committee of Congreſs, yet he was authoriſed to confer with any gentlemen of influence in the Colonies, on the means of reſtoring a good

To this the Deputies replied, that they could not conſider themſelves in any other character than that in which Congreſs had placed them; but ſhould however attend to any propoſition he might have authority to make for the purpoſe he had mentioned.

Lord Howe then entered upon the ſubject of the meeting in a diſcourſe of ſome length. The chief purport of it was to inform them of the ſincere and earneſt deſire of the King and miniſtry to make the Britiſh government eaſy and acceptable to them in every reſpect. In caſe of ſubmiſſion, they were aſſured, that thoſe acts of Parliament which were ſo obnoxious to them, would undergo a reviſal, and the inſtructions to Governors would be reconſidered; that if any juſt cauſes of complaint were found in the acts, or the inſtructions, they might be removed.

The Deputies made anſwer, that a return to the domination of Great Britain was not now to be expected. They mentioned the repeated petitions of the Colonies to the King and Parliament, which they complained had been treated with contempt, and anſwered by additional injuries. It was not, ſaid they, till the laſt act of Parliament, which denounced war againſt them, and put them out of the King's protection, that the Americans declared themſelves independent. This declaration had been called for by the people of the Colonies in general.—Every Colony approved of it, and they all now conſidered themſelves as independent ſtates, and had ſettled, or were occupied in ſettling, their governments accordingly. It was not therefore in the power of the Congreſs to agree for them that they ſhould return to their former dependent ſituation.

"There was no doubt," continued they, "that the Americans were inclined to peace, and willing

advantageous to both countries. If there was the ſame good diſpoſition in Britain, it would be eaſier for Lord Howe, though not empowered at preſent to treat with them as independent ſtates, to obtain freſh powers from the Britiſh Court for that purpoſe, than it would be for Congreſs to procure them from the ſeveral Colonies, to conſent to ſubmiſſion."

Such an explicit declaration of their ſentiments on the ſubject in queſtion, ſhowed at once that no accommodation was at the preſent to be expected, and put an end to the conference.

Such was the report made to Congreſs by the committee. "It did not appear upon the whole," added they, "that Lord Howe's commiſſion contained any other authority of importance, than that of granting pardons, with ſuch exceptions, as the commiſſioners ſhould think proper to make, and of declaring America, or any part of it, to be in the King's peace upon ſubmiſſion. The reſidue of the commiſſion conſiſted in the power of inquiring into the ſtate of America, and of conferring and conſulting with any perſons the commiſſioners might think fit. But upon their repreſenting the reſult of theſe converſations to the miniſtry, theſe, on a ſuppoſition the Colonies were to ſubmit, might, after all, or might not, at their pleaſure, make any alterations in the former inſtructions to Governors, or propoſe in Parliament any amendment of the acts complained of. Any expectation, therefore, from the effect of the powers lodged in the commiſſioners, would be too uncertain and precarious to be relied upon by America, had ſhe even continued in her ſtate of dependence."

As the Congreſs ſeemed now immovably determined to perſiſt in the reſolution of maintaining independency at all events, Lord and General Howe, in quality of commiſſioners, judged it neceſſary to

of that Aſſembly's refuſal to accept of the terms of reconciliation offered to them, they informed the people of America, that they were equally deſirous to confer with all well-diſpoſed perſons, upon the means of reſtoring the public tranquility, and eſtabliſhing a permanent union with any Colony, as a part of the Britiſh empire.

Herein it was repreſented, that it being the undoubted intention of the King and Parliament to remove any cauſes by which the people of America might be aggrieved, it behoved the inhabitants at large, ſeriouſly to reflect upon their preſent condition, and to judge for themſelves, whether it were more conſiſtent with their honour and happineſs, to offer up their lives as a ſacrifice to the unjuſt and precarious cauſe, in which they were engaged, or, to return to their allegiance, accept the bleſſings of peace, and be ſecured in the enjoyment of their liberty and their properties, upon the true principles of the Britiſh conſtitution.

In the mean time, the moſt active and vigorous meaſures were reſolved upon. The Provincial forces that had evacuated Long Iſland, were now poſted at New York; where they had erected batteries on every ſpot that could admit of them. They were inceſſantly occupied in firing upon the Britiſh troops and ſhipping, which kept up no leſs conſtant a fire upon them. The Eaſt River lay between both armies. Its breadth in this place was about twelve hundred yards. The Britiſh troops were extremely impatient to paſs it, and attack the enemy, who lay partly in the city of New York, and partly on the main land, guarding every place where they ſuſpected the royal army might attempt to make a deſcent.

The ſhips of war had now ſtationed themſelves in that part of the river which faces the city, and were

was not without much difficulty they silenced those which had proved the most troublesome, and enabled the troops to seize upon those islands, which, though small, annoyed them considerably by the continual fire of the cannon planted upon them, and without the possession of which, the operations intended could not take place. This unceasing cannonade lasted several days, and kept both parties in continual alarms.

The intention was to make a descent upon the island where New York stands. In order to divert the enemy's attention from the real place of attack, several ships were directed to move up the river, to the north of the island; other parts were threatened in the same manner. The more to embarrass the enemy, a small island was secured facing the center of New York Island.

On the 15th of September, a large body of British troops embarked, unobserved by the Provincial army, and proceeded to a bay three miles to the north above the city. As the enemy had not expected they would have chosen this place, they had not prepared it for any considerable resistance. The ships attacked their works with so much vigour, that they were soon abandoned, and the troops set on shore.

When the enemy saw them landed, they did not chuse to risk a defence of the city, and left it instantly, retiring to the north of the island, where their principal force was collected. They lost upon this occasion a great part of their artillery, and military stores, as well as a considerable number of prisoners. They did not, however, retire without fighting, and engaged the British troops wherever they found an opportunity of making an advantageous stand. But it was observed at the same time, that they did not act altogether so vigorously

might proceed from the loſs they had there ſuſtained of many of their beſt officers and ſoldiers, or that it had ſomewhat diſpirited them.

The length of the iſland of New York is full fifteen miles; but the breadth not more than two, where broadeſt. This made it eaſy for the Britiſh forces to extend their camp from ſhore to ſhore. The enemy lay in great force oppoſite to them. They had ſtrengthened the ground they occupied in ſuch a manner, as to render it very difficult and dangerous to attack them. In order to ſecure a communication, and a retreat, if neceſſary, to the continent, they had been particularly careful to fortify the paſſage called King's Bridge, by erecting very conſiderable works on both ſides of the water.

Their diſtance from the Britiſh encampment was not above two miles; but the intervening ground was full of narrow paſſes and defiles, which were in their poſſeſſion, and of ſuch a nature, as to enable a ſmall number to maintain them with facility againſt a much greater.

General Waſhington had very judiciouſly choſen this poſition. He could from thence advance or retire at pleaſure, without apprehending to be cut off in caſe of a defeat, as he was determined to riſk no general engagement, and to ſend out only ſkirmiſhing parties, theſe, in caſe of repulſe, could eaſily withdraw to their main body, which was ſo poſted, as to cover their retreat, without being compelled to expoſe themſelves out of their ſtrong holds, in order to ſecure it.

Another motive was, that he found it neceſſary to give them time to recover from the diſcouragement they had experienced from their late defeats. The ſkilfulneſs and diſcipline obſerved in the Royal army, they had found, to their coſt, to be

the advantages reſulting from them were ſuch as time and experience only would procure. For this reaſon, their commander, without venturing any thing deciſive, kept them in continual exerciſe againſt their enemy. Skirmiſhes and encounters happened daily; and it begun to be noticed by the Britiſh troops, that the Americans gradually recovered their ſpirits, and behaved with much more firmneſs than they had done lately.

The poſſeſſion of New York was not attended with all the advantages that had been expected. It had been concerted by the enemy, previous to its falling into the hands of the Britiſh troops, if it were not found tenable, to commit it to the flames, rather than theſe ſhould reap any benefit from being poſſeſſed of it. The precipitation with which they abandoned that city, prevented them at that time from carrying their intent into execution; but a few days after, ſome perſons, who had been left behind for that purpoſe, watching the opportunity of dry weather and a high wind, ſet fire to the city in the dead of night, by means of combuſtibles, which they had diſpoſed with great dexterity in various places. The conflagration was dreadful; many parts at once being ſuddenly in a blaze. Notwithſtanding the ſpeed and activity with which the ſoldiers and ſailors exerted themſelves, the rapidity of the flames was ſuch, that a fourth part of the city was conſumed. Several of thoſe who had, it was ſaid, been the incendiaries, were, on being diſcovered, treated without mercy; and were, by the irritated ſeamen and ſoldiery, thrown inſtantly into the midſt of the fire.

The ſituation of the enemy in the ſtrong grounds between the city and King's Bridge, rendering an attack there extremely hazardous, it was determined to make ſuch movements as to compel him to aban-

12th Oct. 1776. don them. For this purpoſe an embarkation was made of moſt of the troops in flat-bottomed boats, in which they were ſafely conveyed through a dangerous paſſage called Hell Gate, and landed near the town of Weſt Cheſter, lying on the continent towards Connecticut.

Lord Percy was left with a conſiderable force for the protection of New York, while the fleet ſurrounded that iſland on every ſide, and from the judicious poſition of the ſhips, could at any time afford a ſhelter, in caſe of a diſaſter, or improve any ſucceſs that might be obtained.

From its encampment near Weſt Cheſter, after having received a ſupply of men and proviſions, the army moved to New Rochelle, ſituated on the ſound ſeparating Long Iſland from the continent. Here being joined by freſh reinforcements, it was determined to intercept the communication between the Provincial army and Connecticut, and to ſurround it in ſuch a manner, as to force it, through want of proviſions, to leave its ſtrong holds, and venture an engagement to extricate itſelf.

The Royal army was now poſted in what is called the lower road from New York to the Northern Colonies. The upper lies through an extent of high lands, known by the name of White Plains, full of craggy hills, and difficult paſſes. Thither the army began its march, after leaving a ſufficient force to ſecure the lower road, and the communication with thoſe places from whence ſtores and neceſſaries were to arrive.

General Howe's motions greatly alarmed the Provincials.—They perceived that by remaining in their encampment, though too ſtrong to be forced, yet they would be ſtraitened to ſuch a degree, as to be compelled to quit it at a diſadvantage, of which he would not fail to make the moſt, to their great de-

ment to enſue, unleſs they proved victorious, their condition would be critical in the extreme; a retreat would be next to impracticable, from the ſuperiority in number of the Britiſh forces, and the oppoſition they would meet from the ſhipping.

But excluſive of theſe conſiderations, fatigue, bad quarters, want of cloathing, and of ſome of the moſt eſſential neceſſaries, ſalt eſpecially, had occaſioned much illneſs among the Provincials, which was further increaſed by a vice very predominant among many of the Americans, indolence, and careleſſneſs in what related to their perſons, furniture, and manner of feeding: a deficiency the more ſurpriſing, as they chiefly originate from the Engliſh, who are indiſputably the moſt cleanly people upon earth, and whoſe examples and manners they had always been fond of imitating.

The evidence and proximity of the danger they were in, called up the whole attention of the American commanders. In a council of war ſummoned upon this occaſion, it was reſolved to quit their preſent poſition, and extend the army into a long, but well ſecured line, by throwing up works along its front, and fortifying all the advantageous poſitions they could ſeize. In this manner the Provincial army ſtretched along the ground oppoſite to that where the Royal forces were marching, from Valentine's Hill, near King's-Bridge, on the right, to the White Plains, on the left. The Brunx, a river of conſiderable depth, lay on their front, between them and the Royal army; and the North River covered their rear, at no great diſtance; the intermediate ſpace between ſecuring a paſſage for their heavy baggage up the country, in caſe of neceſſity.

The poſition of the Provincials was ſo advantageous, that great circumſpection was requiſite to prevent them from moleſting the Royal army. It

lance, and left no opening for the enemy to avail himſelf of. This did not however diſcourage them from puſhing ſundry detachments over the Brunx, and ſkirmiſhing upon every favourable occaſion; but though ſometimes ſucceſsful, they were generally worſted. Upon the approach of the Royal army to the White Plains, they were obliged at laſt to call in all their detachments, and to form one ſingle encampment on the banks of the Brunx, in front of the Britiſh army, on the oppoſite ſide of that river.

On the twenty-eighth day of October, at break of day, the Britiſh troops, divided in two columns, advanced towards the White Plains. The enemy maintained the ground in front, occupied by their ſeveral detached parties, till near twelve o'clock, when they withdrew to their main body, which was preparing for the more ſerious engagement which they foreſaw muſt now take place.

At noon, the Britiſh army drew up in order of battle, and marched to the enemies. They were ſtrongly poſted upon an eminence, the ſides of which were protected by the Brunx. Over this river there was but one convenient ford, the banks of which were very ſteep and rocky. On perceiving the approach of the Britiſh troops, they came out of their lines, and occupied the grounds adjoining to the ford with a large force, and a conſiderable number of field-pieces.

Four Britiſh regiments, with a body of Heſſians, and ſome companies of dragoons, were ſelected to force this important paſſage. They marched down to the ford, croſſed it, and through a dreadful fire of muſketry, grape-ſhot, and cannon, aſcended the hill, the bottom of which commences at the ford, in excellent order, and with great intrepidity. Upon gaining the ſummit of that eminence, they were at

tack was conducted with ſuch ſteadineſs and vigour, that they drove them from their poſts, and compelled them to retire towards their entrenchments.

By this time, large diviſions of the Britiſh army had followed that which forced the paſſage of the Brunx. They made themſelves completely maſters of the ground that had been poſſeſſed by the enemy, after diſlodging them from a variety of poſts, which they maintained with great obſtinacy till towards evening.

A large diviſion of the Britiſh and Heſſian troops encamped in the night within cannon-ſhot of the enemy's entrenchments; and the whole army lay upon their arms, intending to attack the enemy's camp next morning. But as ſoon as it was light, the Provincials were diſcovered to have made ſuch additional works to the lines they had thrown up before, that it was judged too dangerous to attack them without a greater ſtrength. Reinforcements being arrived, preparations were made for the deſigned aſſault, but it was prevented by a rainy and tempeſtuous night, that quite fruſtrated the arrangements that had been taken for that purpoſe.

But whatever ſhow the Provincials had made of a reſolution to ſtand their ground, when they ſaw that diſpoſitions were making in the Britiſh army which indicated a vigorous attack, they thought it moſt adviſable to withdraw. They accordingly broke up their camp in the night of the firſt of November, and removed into a mountainous country, called the Townſhip of Newcaſtle, having previouſly ſet fire to the houſes in White Plains, and the neighbourhood.

What principally intimidated the Americans on this occaſion, was the formidable appearance of the batteries with which they ſaw their lines threatened, from ſeveral heights ſurrounding them. They were alſo no leſs apprehenſive that General Howe might

poſſeſs himſelf of the hills that lay in the rear of the Provincial army, by which he would command it in ſuch a manner, that a retreat would become impracticable in caſe of a defeat.

Neither was a formal engagement any part of the ſyſtem formed by General Waſhington. To avoid it was the ſettled intent of all his operations, which tended to no more than to harraſs and fatigue the enemy, and accuſtom his own people gradually to face them, that whenever it ſhould be abſolutely requiſite to come to a pitched battle, they might be ſo well trained and uſed to face their enemies, that a reaſonable confidence might be placed in their exertions.

In the mean time, General Howe fully perceived, that notwithſtanding his repeated endeavours, he could not bring the enemy to an action, and that from the ſituation of the country, and their knowledge of every place and ſpot where they could fix themſelves advantageouſly, it would be impoſſible to compel them to fight but upon the moſt unequal and hazardous terms. He therefore took the determination of ceaſing a purſuit, that would only prove the more ineffectual the longer it was continued, and to turn his attention to the diſpoſſeſſing them of the forts and faſtneſſes they ſtill retained in the neighbourhood of New York. The diſtance at which they had retired, would render the conqueſt of theſe places a work of much leſs difficulty than it would have been, had ſuch an attempt taken place before the Britiſh troops had gained a decided ſuperiority in the field.

In order to carry this meaſure into execution, a body of troops advanced to King's Bridge, from which the Americans withdrew, without oppoſition, into Fort Waſhington, which was immediately inveſted. This fort was ſituated on the weſtern ſide of New York iſland, at a ſmall diſtance from King's

bridge, and almoſt oppoſite to Fort Lee, lately erected on the other ſide of the water, in the Province of Jerſey. The fortifications, though in good order, were not ſufficiently ſtrong to reſiſt the weight of ſuch artillery as would be brought againſt it, if neceſſary. Its chief ſtrength was in its ſituation, and the difficulty of approaching it without being expoſed to a heavy fire from the garriſon, and the adjacent works and lines that ſurrounded it on every ſide. It was defended by three thouſand men, and well provided with artillery, and ſeemed to threaten a ſtout reſiſtance.

The Governor, Colonel Magaw, being ſummoned to ſurrender, and having made anſwer that he would defend the fort to the laſt extremity, it was determined to make a general attack. Four diviſions of the army were employed for this purpoſe. One of them, compoſed of Heſſians, under General
16th Nov. Knyphauſen, moved forward about noon,
1776. from King's Bridge; a thick wood lay before him, where the enemy was poſted ſo advantageouſly, that it was a conſiderable time before he could penetrate. During this attack, a body of Britiſh light infantry advanced upon a party of the enemy, who were poſted behind rocks and trees, from whence they kept up an inceſſant fire. They diſperſed them, however, by climbing a ſteep aſcent, from whence they came down upon the enemy with ſuch impetuoſity, that they were unable to withſtand them. They were followed and ſupported by a detachment of the Guards, under General Mathews, and another body of Britiſh troops, under Lord Cornwallis. In the mean time, another diviſion, under Lord Percy, carried an advanced work; and Colonel Sterling, at the head of the forty-ſecond regiment, forced his way up a difficult height, which was very reſolutely defended: he

LORD CORNWALLIS.

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number of prisoners, and greatly facilitated Lord Percy's success.

Colonel Ralle, who led the right column of General Knyphausen's attack, forced the enemy from their posts, after an obstinate resistance, pushed forward to their advanced works, and lodged his column within one hundred yards of the fort. He was soon after joined by the left column, under General Knyphausen; upon which the garrison surrendered prisoners of war.

As Fort Lee lay opposite to Fort Washington, it was necessary to secure it, in order to acquire the full command of the North River. To this intent Lord Cornwallis crossed over the river to the Jersey side, with a strong body, and marched with all expedition towards the fort, in order, if possible, to surprize the garrison. Herein he certainly would have succeeded, had not a countryman apprized them of their danger. It was with much difficulty, 18th Nov. and in the utmost confusion, that they 1776. effected an escape, leaving all their artillery and warlike stores, their tents standing, and all their provisions.

In consequence of these successes, the British troops penetrated into the furthermost parts of both East and West Jersey, without meeting any opposition, the enemy carefully avoiding them every where. They extended the quarters in which they proposed to winter, from New Brunswick, as far as the river Delaware. Had a sufficient number of boats been at hand, for the ferrying over the British troops, it is highly probable that Philadelphia would have fallen into their hands, so great was the consternation among the Americans at that period. But as an attempt of this kind had been expected, care had been duly taken to remove them in time.

an expedition was undertaken againſt Rhode Iſland, under the direction of General Clinton, and Admiral Sir Peter Parker. Their ſucceſs was complete; the Provincials abandoned the iſland at their approach, and they made themſelves maſters of it without loſing a man. By this meaſure, the American ſquadron, under Commodore Hopkins, was compelled to withdraw as far up the river Providence as it was practicable, and to continue there blocked up and uſeleſs.

The ſucceſs which had attended the Britiſh arms during the preſent campaign, began to make a ſerious impreſſion upon numbers of the people throughout the continent. Notwithſtanding the firmneſs expreſſed by their leaders, many ſeemed to entertain but faint hopes of their being able to continue effectually their reſiſtance to the power of Britain.—Such as were diſinclined to hoſtile meaſures, were not wanting to repreſent in their ſtrongeſt light, the calamities which had already been experienced in ſo many parts of the continent, and the ſtill greater miſeries they ſhould endure by perſiſting in a conteſt that appeared ſo unequal.

Theſe repreſentations had their weight with multitudes. Notwithſtanding the violence with which the warm advocates of independency ſupported the propriety of that meaſure, there were many who did not ſcruple openly to declare, that peace and reconciliation with Great Britain, would have been far more eligible.

Sentiments of this kind, though combated with great force and energy by the contrary party, were the more alarming to thoſe who were at the head of public affairs, as they daily perceived a viſible declenſion of that ardour in the cauſe for which they were contending, which had ſo forcibly animated all claſſes in the laſt campaign, and the beginning

continuance of this diſpoſition. Relying upon the ſpirit that manifeſted itſelf throughout the Colonies, they had ventured to take the bold and decisive reſolution of declaring America independent. The confidence with which they had acted before, and after that meaſure, had ſurprized the world, and inclined reflecting people to think, that they had more reſources in contemplation than they choſe to divulge.

But when in this depreſſion of their circumſtances, they ſaw none of that aſſiſtance appear which they conjectured had been expected, and in the certitude of which they imagined that ſo many daring meaſures had been taken, they began to call in doubt the prudence and foreſight of thoſe who had adopted them, and to be of opinion, that raſhneſs and intemperate councils had produced them. The danger was ſo great, the preſſures of every kind ſo heavy, that it now ſeemed, unleſs they had provided friends to ſuccour them in their preſent difficulties, they would unavoidably ſink under them; and that, if having endeavoured to obtain them, they had failed in the attempt, they were guilty of a fatal precipitation and overſight in the management of their affairs, and had acted very unwiſely in bidding defiance to the power of Great Britain.

CHAP

CHAP. XXII.

Tranſactions in Canada.

1776.

WHILE the campaign in the Province of New York and its adjacencies was carried on with ſo much vigour and activity, the operations in Canada were no leſs ſpirited and remarkable.

After the expulſion of the Provincial troops from thoſe parts, and the reſtoration of peace and ſecurity to the government of Quebec, General Carlton turned his attention to the great object he had long had in view, that of penetrating into the Colonies by way of the Lakes.

The Provincials were now collected in great force at Crown Point, and were abſolute maſters of Lake Champlain, where Britain had not a ſingle veſſel to oppoſe them. Had not this been the caſe, they would have been purſued in their retreat, by the troops under General Burgoyne ſo cloſely, that it is probable the diſcouragement they were in, from the loſſes they had ſuſtained, and from that illneſs ſo much dreaded in America, the ſmall pox, which was then fatally raging among them, would have given ſo decided an aſcendancy to the Britiſh arms, that all reſiſtance would have fallen before them: they would have reduced all the forts that commanded the communication between Canada and the Colonies, and opened an entrance into theſe, that would have facilitated the operations of the fleets and armies of Great Britain in every other quarter.

The principal point now in view, was to remove thoſe obſtacles with all poſſible expedition. This was an arduous undertaking, full of difficulties and

impediments, and that required a peculiar degree of courage and perſeverance to ſurmount. But the neceſſity of accompliſhing it, infuſed uncommon animation into all thoſe who were concerned, and produced ſuch efforts and exertions as were truly great and aſtoniſhing.

In order to acquire a ſuperiority upon the Lake, it was calculated that no leſs than thirty veſſels would be required. Some of the largeſt, indeed, came from England; but it was neceſſary to take them intirely to pieces, and to re-conſtruct them, beſides the immenſe labour which the carrying and conveying of ſuch cumberſome and prodigious loads occaſioned.

The greateſt obſtruction lay in thoſe rapid currents of water, that run between Lake Champlain and the River St. Lawrence. Here the toil and patience of the Britiſh ſeamen and ſoldiers were almoſt incredible: they tranſported over land, and dragged up theſe rapids, thirty large long boats, a number of flat-bottomed boats of conſiderable burthen, a gondola of thirty tons, and above four hundred batteaux.

This ſtupendous undertaking was completed in three months. No leſs a diſpatch was wanted. The importance of the object, and the ſhortneſs of the time that would be left for military operations, from the lateneſs of the ſeaſon, were motives that haſtened the labour and diligence with which this armament was equipped, to ſuch a degree, that the principal veſſel, carrying three maſts, and eighteen twelve pounders, was finiſhed in twenty eight days from the laying of her keel; and completely rigged and fitted for action. The ſame ſpeed and eagerneſs atchieved the whole of this laborious and perplexing buſineſs, in a proportionable ſpace of time.

It was intended, after ſecuring the navigation of the Lakes, and taking poſſeſſion of the forts com-

manding them, to push forwards with all expeditiousness to Albany, where they would meet with such accommodations as would enable them to winter commodiously. In this case they would be at hand, as soon as the severity of that season was over, to co-operate in so decisive a manner with the army at New York, as to put a successful termination to the war early in the spring.

In the beginning of October, the fleet was in readiness. It consisted, exclusive of the ship already mentioned, of two stout schooners, the one mounting fourteen, the other twelve six pounders, a large flat bottomed radeau, with six twenty-four, and six twelve pounders, and a gondola with eight nine pounders. Twenty vessels of lesser size, called gun boats, carried each a brass piece of ordnance, from nine to twenty-four pounders, or howitzers. Several long boats were equipped in the same manner. Besides these, there was a great number of boats and tenders of various sizes, to serve as transports for the troops, baggage, warlike stores, provisions, and all the other appurtenances of the army, that was to be conveyed over the Lake under the protection of this fleet.

It was manned with a select body of seamen, and the guns were served by a detachment of the corps of artillery. Officers and soldiers, chosen out of the troops that belonged to this expedition, were appointed to the management of the small arms. Those who were present on this occasion, unanimously concurred in acknowledging that they had never seen a completer a preparation both for military and naval service.

The naval force of the Provincials bore no proportion to the British. The list amounted to no more than fifteen vessels, the largest of which was a schooner, and mounted twelve six and four pounders. Notwithstanding

tance of preſerving the ſuperiority on the Lake, and had exerted themſelves to the utmoſt of their power, they had not been able to attain their point in any degree adequate to the preſſingneſs of the occaſion. The truth was, they were deficient in many requiſites for that purpoſe. Beſides the want of materials for conſtruction, they had not a ſufficiency of other ſtores, and their ſea ports were ſo taken up in the building of privateers, and ſhips for the ſervice of Congreſs, that no carpenters could be ſpared.

They prepared themſelves, however, with the force they had, to encounter that of Britain; and endeavoured to ſupply the defect of ſtrength, by the dexterity of their management. They were commanded by General Arnold, lately promoted to this rank, on account of his gallant behaviour in many inſtances, ſince the commencement of the war. Though not bred a ſeaman, he had exhibited ſo many proofs of an uncommon genius, in whatever he had attempted, that Congreſs did not heſitate to truſt him with the important commiſſion of defending the Lakes againſt a much ſuperior power.

On the eleventh of October, General Carlton, at the head of the Britiſh fleet, came up with the Provincial armament. It was drawn up with great ſkill, between an iſland and the main land, in order to prevent the Britiſh fleet from ſurrounding it. An action now began that laſted ſome hours, and was maintained with equal courage on both ſides. The wind being unfavourable, prevented the ſtrongeſt veſſels of the Britiſh fleet from coming to action. The engagement was ſupported by a ſchooner of twelve ſix pounders, and the gun boats: they behaved with extraordinary firmneſs, but the inequality of ſuch a combat, induced General Carlton to draw them off, and to order the fleet to be anchored

in a line, that it might, on a change of wind, be ready for an immediate attack upon the enemy.

The Provincials loſt in this day's fight, a veſſel of twelve guns, which was the ſtrongeſt they had; together with one of their beſt gondolas. Great execution was done among their other veſſels by the Britiſh gun boats, in which the corps of artillery was chiefly ſtationed.

From the loſs that had befallen them, they were now fully convinced that they would not be able to ſtand an attack from the whole fleet; they determined therefore to make the beſt of their way to Crown Point, where they ſhould lie under the ſhelter of the guns of that fortreſs. They took the advantage of the enſuing night accordingly, and, favoured by darkneſs, withdrew unperceived, and were the next morning out of ſight: but the Britiſh fleet purſued them with ſo much expedition, that after a chace of near two days, they were overtaken upon the ſecond, and compelled to come to action in their defence.

It continued with great warmth upwards of two hours. Thoſe veſſels, in the mean while, which were moſt a-head, crouded ſail and effected their eſcape: they paſſed Crown Point and ran for Ticonderoga. Only two galleys, and five gondolas, remained with General Arnold. With theſe he made a long and intrepid ſtand; but his ſecond in command, General Waterburg, being taken with his veſſel, and the others making but a faint reſiſtance, he determined, in order to prevent his people and ſhipping from falling into the enemy's hands, to run theſe aſhore, and ſet them on fire. He executed his intention with great ſkilfulneſs.

Though General Arnold had been unſucceſsful on this occaſion, the diſparity of ſtrength duly conſidered, he loſt no reputation, and roſe on the contrary in the eſtimation of his countrymen. He

had, in their opinion, acquitted himself with no less ability in this naval encounter, than he had done at land before. One particular gained him much applause. He remained on board the vessel he commanded, and kept her colours flying, till she was on fire, to prevent the enemy from boarding her and striking them.

This victory over the Provincial fleet was complete and decisive. It broke entirely their naval force upon the Lake; a few only of their vessels escaped to Lake George; and the garrison of Crown Point, having destroyed whatever could not be moved off, evacuated it, and withdrew to Ticonderoga.

After taking possession of Crown Point, General Carlton had conceived the design of attacking the latter. To this intent parties were detached to reconnoitre it, and vessels approached it on the Lake with the same view. But the fortifications appeared so strong, the garrison so numerous, and so many other impediments presented themselves, that it was thought expedient to lay the design aside, until the return of spring, when he would be assisted by the favourableness of the weather in an enterprize, which the lateness of the season, and the probability of its being obstructed by the severity of approaching winter, rendered extremely doubtful and hazardous.

These considerations induced General Carlton to conduct his army back to Canada, where they could be stationed in convenient winter quarters, and open the next campaign in health and vigour. The force intended for the operations to be then pursued was to be strongly reinforced, and great efforts made to strike a decisive blow. As the passage over the Lakes was now cleared, and no time would be lost in preparing for it, as happened in the present campaign, the march of the army would be expeditious,

ble. Sanguine expectations were alſo entertained that the victorious army, under General Howe, would find ſuch employment for the Provincial troops, that inſtead of ſparing any for the reinforcement of thoſe at Ticonderoga, all that could be collected in New England, would be required for the ſupport of General Waſhington. Thus an eaſy road would be opened to the royal army in Canada. Aſſiſted by a variety of advantages, and retarded by few difficulties, it would take the field with the moſt flattering proſpects; and while the ſouthern Colonies were falling beneath the Britiſh arms on one ſide, the northern would be equally compelled to ſubmit on the other.

CHAP. XXIII.

Tranſactions in the Jerſeys.

1776.

THE great ſucceſs with which the Royal armies cloſed this campaign, had given them a degree of confidence that augmented daily, from the little proſpect remaining to the Congreſs of being able to retrieve their affairs. Their army was now, through loſſes in battle, the numbers made priſoners, and deſertions, conſiderably diminiſhed. But that which contributed to break it up effectually, was the principle upon which it had been firſt raiſed and embodied. The term for which the men enliſted was only a twelvemonth, at the expiration of which they were at liberty to quit the ſervice. This, doubtleſs, was the readieſt method of procuring ſoldiers, at a time when, perhaps, no other expedient was expected to be ever wanted; but now, that the conteſt was becoming daily more ſerious, it was evidently neceſſary to form a more ſettled and durable eſtabliſhment in the military line.

Unaccuſtomed to the ſevere reſtraint of a ſoldier's life, nothing but the zeal with which all claſſes were animated for the common defence, could have prevailed upon them to ſubmit to the hardſhips accompanying ſuch a profeſſion. Having fulfilled their agreement, they thought it equally incumbent on their fellow countrymen, to undergo their ſhare of this public burthen, as well as themſelves.

Herein they certainly reaſoned very juſtly; but however they might be juſtified by the principles of equity in relinquiſhing the ſervice, it was utterly

tion of military duty might have anſwered, had they been all equally experienced; but where, on the contrary, they were equally new to the buſineſs, it was requiſite that ſuch as had gained ſome knowledge in it, ſhould perſevere in the ſervice: eſpecially as thoſe whom they were to oppoſe in the field were veterans in the profeſſion, againſt whom every one ſhould now be ſummoned that was capable of being of any utility.

The American army was now entirely diſbanded. Out of near thirty thouſand men, of which it conſiſted at the time when General Howe landed on Staten Iſland, hardly three thouſand remained embodied. Theſe, though probably the beſt troops they had, were too inconſiderable a number to form any reliance upon, againſt the attempts that were expected from the enemy. The military turn they were endued with, or had acquired, and their attachment to the cauſe they were fighting for, and perhaps to the General that commanded them, were the motives that prevented them from following the example of their fellow-ſoldiers. But whatever cauſe retained them together, it proved, in the iſſue, a circumſtance much more important and deciſive, than could at that time have been imagined.

In the mean while, various diſtreſſes were accumulating upon the Congreſs, and every day ſeemed to add freſh reaſons to look upon their condition as deſperate. Among other unfortunate accidents, one befel them which was peculiarly calamitous in their preſent circumſtances. General Lee had with great pains and diligence, gathered a conſiderable number of men, with whom he was marching with all poſſible ſpeed to the aſſiſtance of General Waſhington, who was expecting him, at the head of the Pennſylvanian militia. By the junction of their forces they hoped to form a body ſufficient to guard

British troops cantoned in the neighbourhood. As the road held by General Lee was at a considerable distance from any of the Royal army's quarters, he thought himself fully secured from any danger on that side, and, of course, neglected to take those precautions which he would otherwise have done. The consequence was, that in crossing the upper part of New Jersey, from the North River, he took up his quarters at a house considerably removed from the main-body, where he remained with a slender guard. Colonel Harcourt happened at that time to be in the neighbourhood, with a detachment of light horse, that had been scouring the country, to obtain information, and to observe the motions of that body which was under the General's command. Whether it proceeded from attachment to Britain, or a hope of reward, a man acquainted the Colonel with General Lee's situation, and how easy it would be to seize and carry off his person without hindrance. Upon this intelligence, the Colonel hastened with all speed to the place where the General lay, and took his measures with so much dexterity, that the centries posted about his quarters were secured without noise, the house forced open, and the General made prisoner. He was immediately mounted, and hurried away with all possible expedition, through a considerable extent of country, where a number of posts, well guarded, lay in the way of those who took him, but they found means to avoid, or to escape them, by the rapidity of their motion, and brought him safely to New York.

This capture of General Lee was a heavy loss to the Americans. His professional knowledge was great, and acquired by an experience accompanied with a perpetual study. He had contributed eminently to form the American troops; he was full of activity and resources, and of

terprising disposition. Such an officer was not easily to be replaced.

This event was productive, at the same time, of disagreeable consequences in other respects. A regulation for the exchange of prisoners had been settled between General Howe and General Washington. It had been duly observed hitherto; but there being no prisoner at present of equal rank with General Lee in the hands of the Provincials, it was proposed to deliver six field officers in exchange for him, as an adequate compensation for the difference of degree. Should this offer be refused, it was required that he should be treated suitably to his rank, until he could be exchanged upon a footing of personal equality.

The answer was, that General Lee had deserted from the British service, and could not be considered as a prisoner of war. He could not, therefore, claim the benefit of the regulation. This refusal occasioned much altercation. As General Lee had in the beginning of these troubles, resigned his half-pay as a British officer, it was insisted, that he could not, in common equity, be esteemed a deserter; and that no person being excepted in the regulation, he was entitled to it in the strictest justice.

The Americans expressed much resentment at the refusal to release General Lee. Several British officers, who were their prisoners, were treated with severity upon that account. The Congress renewed the declaration they had made precisely a twelvemonth before, by which they threatened, that whatever punishment should be inflicted upon any persons in the power of their enemies, for favouring, aiding, or abetting the cause of American liberty, should be retaliated in the same kind, and the same degree, upon those in their own power who

now declared, in the ſame manner, that their future treatment of ſuch officers of the Britiſh army as fell into their hands, ſhould in every reſpect be regulated by that which General Lee experienced, and that their perſons ſhould be anſwerable in the utmoſt extent for any violence that was offered to him.

This declaration of the Congreſs was accompanied by ſeveral others equally bold and reſolute; by which it was manifeſt, that the dangers with which they were at this time environed had not depreſſed their courage. The loſſes and defeats they had ſo repeatedly met with, had inclined many to think that they would relax of their inflexibility, and propoſe ſome terms of pacification. But they who had entertained ſuch an opinion of them were utterly deceived. Inſtead of betraying the leaſt mark of deſpondency, their behaviour was full of undauntedneſs; they encouraged all men to perſiſt reſolutely in the meaſures they had embraced, and to admit of none that were not firm and ſpirited.

They exerted themſelves in the mean time with indefatigable diligence to retrieve their loſſes, and to recover their army from that ſtate of feebleneſs to which it had been reduced, by the neceſſity of complying with the requiſitions of thoſe people whoſe time of ſervice was expired. They now were furniſhed with a juſt plea for altering their military plan in that particular. They had in almoſt an inſtant been deprived of their army; and from this untoward circumſtance, the affairs of the public were thrown into the utmoſt confuſion, and every body was alarmed for the ſafety of the ſtate.

In order to obviate the fatal conſequences that might enſue from the continuance of ſuch a ſyſtem, the Congreſs ordered a new army to be levied; of which the ſoldiers ſhould be bound by the form of

continuance of the war. This army was to conſiſt of eighty-eight battalions, furniſhed in proportionable ſhares by each of the Colonies, and to be raiſed and ſupported at their expence. Great prudence and diſcretion were uſed upon this occaſion, that no Colony ſhould have reaſon to complain of being charged with any more than its due proportion.—Perſons well informed of their comparative abilities, were employed in drawing up the ſcheme, by which they were to carry this meaſure into execution.—Virginia and Maſſachuſet were each aſſeſſed at fifteen battalions; Pennſylvania at twelve; North Carolina at nine; South Carolina at ſix; Connecticut at eight; Maryland the ſame; New Hampſhire at three; Rhode Iſland at two; Delaware at one; and Georgia the ſame. The two Provinces of New York and Jerſey, being partly in the enemy's poſſeſſion, having greatly ſuffered already, and being liable to ſuffer ſtill further from his incurſions and depredations, were on that account highly favoured in this eſtimate, and rated at no more than four battalions each.

The moſt liberal encouragements were held out, in order to induce people to enliſt. Twenty dollars were given as a bounty to every ſoldier that enliſted; beſides an allotment of lands at the end of the war to all that ſurvived, and to the families of thoſe who ſhould loſe their lives in the ſervice. In this re partition of lands among the military, the republican carefulneſs to prevent too much inequality, was remarkably viſible. The ſhare of a ſoldier was one hundred acres; that of an enſign one hundred and fifty; a lieutenant two hundred; a captain three hundred; a major four hundred; a lieutenant-colonel four hundred and fifty; and the higheſt of any, that of a colonel, no more than five hundred. To thoſe who engaged only for three

An inſtance of care and foreſight was manifeſted in the arrangement of this buſineſs, that reflected much credit upon thoſe who conducted it.—In order to prevent the evil effects of that prodigal and careleſs diſpoſition ſo common among ſoldiers, they were not permitted to alienate the lands deſigned for them during the courſe of the war. By theſe means, they would not, at its concluſion, find themſelves in a ſtate of indigence; and thoſe individuals would be diſappointed, who lie on the watch to make a profit of the thoughtleſſneſs and indolence of others in pecuniary matters.

Previous to this new regulation, the Congreſs had ordained, as an encouragement and reward of military ſervices, that all officers, ſoldiers, and ſeamen, diſabled through wounds received in action, ſhould enjoy during life, half of the pay to which their rank entitled them when the misfortune befel them.

This meaſure of diſtributing lands, as a recompence to the military, was deſigned as a counteraction to another of a ſimilar kind on the part of Great Britain. Large grants of vacant lands were promiſed to thoſe who acted with loyalty in the preſent diſpute. But inſtead of producing any benefit, this meaſure had more powerfully contributed to increaſe reſiſtance, and to augment animoſity, than any other that had been adopted. Conſidering vacancy to mean forfeiture, the Americans made no doubt, that in caſe the Britiſh arms ſhould prevail, their eſtates and poſſeſſions would be confiſcated, and become the property of the victorious party, and that very little moderation would be ſhown, where ſuch a number of claimants were to be rewarded.

In the mean time, the funds provided by each Colony reſpectively, being found inadequate to the ſupport of ſo large a force as they were about to raiſe

raiſe, and to the vaſt demands ariſing from ſo expenſive a war, the Congreſs addreſſed themſelves to the public for a loan of five millions of dollars, at the rate of four per cent. intereſt, for the reimburſement of which the United States became ſecurity.

During the proſecution of theſe meaſures, the ſituation of the Americans was becoming daily more critical. The Britiſh troops were at this time overrunning the Jerſeys: they were maſters of all the country in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia, and occupied all the places of any conſequence on the Delaware, which was the only boundary between them and that city.

In this extremity, the Congreſs thought it neceſſary to appeal to the inhabitants of the continent, in order to remind them of the engagements they had entered into for their mutual defence, and to ſummon them forth for the protection of the ſtate in its preſent danger.

They repreſented to them the immediate neceſſity of concurring with ſpeed and unanimity in the meaſures planned for the common ſafety. They recapitulated the grievances they had ſuffered, the contempt with which they had been treated, and the many other complaints, ſo often alledged by the people of America. No alternative remained but a manly reſiſtance, or a ſpiritleſs ſubmiſſion. Nothing but an unconditional ſurrender would ſatisfy the pride of their enemies. It had been, to avoid ſo enormous an evil, that Congreſs had recurred to the Declaration of Independency, which alone could place them on a proper footing to withſtand their enemies, and to procure them, in caſe of need, the aſſiſtance of friends. Their cauſe had proſpered in a manner that had even outgone their expectations. The enemy had been foiled in a va-

no doubt of ſucceſs, and had dearly paid for the advantages they had lately gained. But theſe had little ſolidity, and would not laſt, when once the Americans had reunited their now ſcattered forces. Theſe, however, had not yielded to the foe; their diſperſion was occaſioned merely from the ſhortneſs of the term of enliſtment, and the punctuality with which the ſoldiers had been diſcharged at its expiration. This was the only cauſe of the diſtreſs to which the public was now reduced; which, however, would ſpeedily be remedied by the arrangements that were to take place in future. Theſe would effectually prevent a repetition of the difficulties under which they now were labouring. They aſſured them, at the ſame time, that foreign ſtates had already rendered them eſſential ſervices, and had given them the moſt poſitive aſſurances of further aid. With ſuch a proſpect of aſſiſtance on the one hand, and of the miſeries they would be ſubjected to, if the enemy was not reſiſted on the other, they would be ſhamefully wanting to themſelves, if they did not combine their whole ſtrength for the protection of ſo many valuable objects now at ſtake.

Such was the ſubſtance of the repreſentation made by the Congreſs to the people of America. It produced accordingly the deſired effects. They unanimouſly determined to exert themſelves to the utmoſt in this ſeaſon of univerſal danger, and to ſend whatever reinforcements could be raiſed, to join thoſe forces that lay in the vicinity of Philadelphia. The protection of that rich and important city, now became the principal object of attention; and it was reſolved to leave nothing untried, to prevent it from falling into the poſſeſſion of the Britiſh troops.

Excluſive of the natural dread of being expoſed to the mercy of a victorious enemy, the Americans were at this juncture particularly apprehenſive of

Great Britain. Of all the meaſures that had been taken againſt them, that of hiring foreigners to invade their country, had given them the higheſt offence. Britiſh ſoldiers, though acting in the capacity of foes, ſtill retained the feelings of countrymen, and would not ſhed their blood without ſome compunction. They were born and bred in a country noted for humanity, and the conſtitution of which inculcated mildneſs. But the Heſſians were of a ferocious diſpoſition: educated under a deſpotic government, they knew no rights but thoſe of force. Their manners were haughty and violent; they carried deſtruction wherever they were maſters, plundering all before them without diſtinction, and committing the moſt barbarous ravages.

They had, it was ſaid, been told, before their departure from Germany, that they were to be put in poſſeſſion of the lands of thoſe whom they conquered; and they were full of this expectation at their arrival. But upon diſcovering their miſtake, they reſolved however to make themſelves amends by appropriating whatever they could lay their hands upon. In this manner they carried on a fierce and predatory war; ſparing nothing that came in their way, and behaving with a rapaciouſneſs and inſolence that rendered them deſervedly objects of execration.

Such was the picture which the Americans drew of the Heſſians. But they not only deteſted, they deſpiſed them equally, as baſe mercenaries, ready to commit murder, and to ſlaughter a people with whom they could have no pretence to quarrel, in obedience to a ſovereign, who, like them, was influenced by no motive but that of pay.

The conduct of the Heſſians was extremely offenſive to the Britiſh commanders; but they were too powerful a body to reſtrain by compulſion, as they compoſed almoſt one half of the army. Not-

withſtanding the prudence and ſteadineſs with which General Howe conducted himſelf upon this emergency, it was not poſſible to reſtrain their exceſſes, nor even to prevent them from ſpreading among the Britiſh troops, in a degree to which they would not have certainly been carried, had they not had ſuch examples for a plea.

The depredations of the Heſſians grew at laſt, it was ſaid, ſo enormous, that the ſpoils they were loaded with became an abſolute incumbrance to them; and a frequent impediment in the diſcharge of their military duties.

The deſolation of the Jerſeys was one of the conſequences of this ſpirit of rapine. The Americans who adhered to Britain, attributed to it the ſubſequent decline of the Britiſh cauſe in thoſe and other parts. As the devaſtation was extended indiſcriminately to friend and foe, it equally exaſperated both parties; it confirmed the enmity of the one, and raiſed up a new enemy in the other; and it injured the Britiſh intereſt in all the Colonies.

But, unhappily, the miſchief was not confined to America. The accounts which were ſent to Europe by the enemies of Britain, repreſented the behaviour of its troops in ſo ſcandalous a light, as could not fail to affect the character of the Britiſh nation. Doubtleſs theſe accounts were exaggerated; but they were not the leſs inſiſted upon by thoſe to whom they were addreſſed; who, being the natural enemies of this country, would of courſe encourage every report injurious to its reputation. The French, who from the commencement of the conteſt, were the ſecret abettors of the Americans, openly countenanced all their accuſations, and propagated them every where, in order to prejudice a people, againſt whom they were preparing to act avowedly an hoſtile part, after having long acted an inſidious one.

In the mean time, the approach of winter began to alarm the Americans for the ſafety of Congreſs. As the Britiſh troops lay cantoned on the banks of the Delaware, waiting the opportunity of a froſt, to croſs it without oppoſition, it was judged adviſable for them to remove to Baltimore in Maryland, which lay at a conſiderable diſtance.

By their departure the city was thrown into the utmoſt confuſion. The awe which their preſence inſpired, reſtrained that party which, though inimical to Britain, had oppoſed the declaration of independency. As it found itſelf unable, while alone, to reſiſt the torrent of that ſuperiority which ſupported the power of Congreſs, it now united with that party which was well affected to the cauſe of Britain.

The retreat of the Congreſs, the diſſentions prevailing in the American metropolis, the ſucceſſes of the Britiſh arms, and the danger they now threatened on every ſide, began to operate powerfully upon many individuals. The impreſſion made upon ſome was ſuch, that they left Philadelphia, and came over to the Britiſh quarters, to claim the benefits of ſubmiſſion.

Thoſe who remained in that city, were ſo reſolute in oppoſing the meaſures of Congreſs, that they forcibly prevented it from being put into a poſture of defence, as it had been ordered. General Waſhington, upon information of theſe diſturbances, was obliged to detach a conſiderable part of his ſmall force, in order to quell it.

But though he ſucceeded in ſuppreſſing his opponents within, he was ſtill in hourly apprehenſions from the formidable enemy that threatened from without, and that was now ſtationed in ſuch a manner, as indicated a fixed deſign to force a paſſage into Philadelphia, the moment the froſt was ſet in.

In

In expectation of that opportunity, the British troops were placed in cantonments, extending from Brunſwick on the Rariton, to the Delaware. They occupied a chain of towns and villages through the heart of the Jerſeys; and had ſtretched their quarters along the latter river, into ſeveral places bordering upon Philadelphia.

Notwithſtanding the ſeverity of the ſeaſon, General Waſhington determined to make ſome attempt on thoſe quarters of the Britiſh army that lay neareſt to that city, in hope of diſlodging and conſtraining them to remove to a leſs alarming ſtation. A body of Heſſians lay at Trenton; another at Bordentown, ſome miles lower; and a third was poſted at Burlington: theſe three towns were on the Delaware, the laſt within twenty miles of Philadelphia. Their late ſucceſſes had inſpired them with a preſumption, and confidence in their military ſuperiority, and a contempt of the Americans, that was by no means juſtifiable. They forgot the many cauſes that had contributed to the defeats of theſe; and were too ready to aſcribe them entirely to their own valour. In conſequence of this idea, they looked upon them as a people quite broken and conquered, from whom they had nothing henceforth to apprehend, and whom they might treat as they thought proper, without any danger of retaliation.

Full of theſe notions, they laid aſide all carefulneſs and vigilance. They became inattentive to the motions of the Americans; and were wholly taken up with thoſe licentious courſes that had rendered them ſo odious. It was in a great meaſure owing to the hatred that was borne them on theſe accounts, that ſo much alacrity was ſhewn in concurring with the project that was forming againſt them. Private animoſity was no leſs powerful upon this occaſion than public ſpirit.

General Waſhington availed himſelf of this diſpoſition, to execute the plan he had in view, which was to ſurprize them in their quarters, while they lay at a diſtance from each other. This was the only method remaining to attack them with any hope of ſucceſs; as when united, their force was ſuch, as to overwhelm the ſmall numbers to which he was now reduced. Should he delay this attempt, they would undoubtedly collect their whole ſtrength, the moment they found the Delaware was ſufficiently frozen to afford them a paſſage. As this was daily expected, the intended attempt admitted of no procraſtination. At all events it would prove of ſervice, by obliging them to withdraw to more diſtant quarters, when they found themſelves unſafe from the moleſtation of the enemy in thoſe which they occupied: this would give time for the ſuccours that were haſtening from various quarters, to join him, and to compoſe a ſtrength, which might enable him effectually to protect Philadelphia, and the Province of Pennſylvania, from the incurſion that was projected againſt them.

A conſiderable proportion of the force which General Waſhington had under his command at this time, conſiſted of men drafted from the militia of Pennſylvania and Virginia: though new levies, they were expert in their exerciſe, and good markſmen. When incorporated with thoſe who had remained with him, on the American army's late diſbanding, and who were the beſt troops he had, they would, it was reaſonably expected, become ſhortly no contemptible ſoldiers themſelves, and fully ſupply the place of thoſe who had left him. They had a powerful motive to ſtimulate them to exert themſelves: the certainty, that were the enemy to penetrate into their country, they would ſhew it no more favour than they had done to thoſe of which they had taken

General Washington having assembled as considerable a force as he could collect in the vicinity, and as the expeditiousness with which he must act would permit, divided it into three bodies; they were each to arrive at the place of appointment on the evening of the twenty-fifth of December. The first was to cross the Delaware at Trenton ferry, a little below the town; the second somewhat lower than Bordentown; the third division he commanded in person, accompanied by Generals Sullivan and Green. It consisted of near three thousand of the best men in the American service; he had also a train of twenty field pieces. He marched at the head of his division to a ferry some miles above Trenton, with an intent to pass it at midnight; which would enable him to arrive at Trenton by break of day, and surprize the enemy before they could make ready to receive him. But he was so retarded by the difficulty of breaking the ice, for the passage of the boats, that it was four in the morning before he could land his party on the opposite shore; and when this had been effected, a heavy storm of snow and hail rendered the roads so slippery, that it was past eight o'clock before they reached the precincts of Trenton. The General had, upon landing, ordered a division of his men to take the lower road on the water side, while he proceeded with the other on the upper road, the more effectually to surround and cut off the retreat of the enemy.

Notwithstanding the retardments they met with, and that it was now broad day, the enemy did not discover them, till one of his detached posts was attacked by the General's division, and the out guards on the lower side of the town were attacked by the other. Assailed in this unexpected manner, Colonel Ralle, who was the commanding officer at Trenton, made every effort that could be expected from a veteran of great experience

He formed his own regiment with the utmoſt celerity, and advanced at the head of it to ſupport the party that had been firſt attacked; but it was now flying in ſuch confuſion, that it threw his regiment into diſorder, and obliged it to retire into the town. They were rallied, and brought again to charge the enemy by Colonel Ralle; but on his receiving a mortal wound, he was compelled to quit the command, and his troops, diſpirited by this accident, were broken after a ſhort reſiſtance, and their artillery ſeized. They were at laſt completely ſurrounded; and after making a fruitleſs endeavour to retreat, they were compelled to ſurrender.

The number of ſlain upon this occaſion was not conſiderable on either ſide; but that of priſoners was near a thouſand. None eſcaped but ſuch as lay at a diſtance from the ſcene of action, in places further down the River. Had the two other diviſions of General Waſhington's little army been able to croſs the Delaware, as propoſed, the whole corps ſtationed at Trenton, muſt unavoidably have fallen into his hands; but the ice had rendered the river impaſſable.

In conſequence of not being joined by theſe two diviſions, he repaſſed the Delaware. His own was too weak to maintain its ground againſt the force that would infallibly march out againſt him, on receiving intelligence of what had happened. A large body of the enemy lay in the neighbourhood of Trenton, and might in a few hours be aſſembled.

His return to Philadelphia, with ſuch a conſiderable number of priſoners, was a circumſtance the more pleaſing, as it was totally unexpected. To ſurprize a body of veterans, and to defeat them in their own quarters, was an action that no people durſt hope to ſee executed by troops ſo much infe-

Such as were religiously inclined, attributed this ſucceſs to the interpoſition of Providence; which had purpoſely ſuffered America to be reduced to the loweſt ebb of diſtreſs, in order to teach them not to rely ſo much upon their own ſtrength, as on that of an all-ruling power. Thoſe, on the other hand, who choſe to account for events from natural cauſes, aſcribed this ſurpriſing of the Heſſians to the ſupineneſs of their conduct, in neglecting to keep a proper look out, and in holding their enemy in too much contempt, to imagine that they would have the boldneſs to conceive, and the ability to execute ſo hazardous an undertaking.

The ſucceſs of this expedition, may be conſidered as one of the moſt favourable circumſtances that befel the Americans in the whole courſe of the war. It happened at a time, when nothing leſs could have ſupported the leaſt hope of their being able to extricate themſelves from their embarraſſments. Neither they, nor their enemies, imagined they could hold out many months; and multitudes were now preparing to make the beſt conditions they could with the conqueror.

The capture of theſe foreign mercenaries, who had done them ſo much miſchief, and of whom they had ſtood ſo much in dread, gave a new turn to their diſpoſition. It removed at once all the fears they were in for their favourite city: it taught them, that they had leſs to apprehend from theſe ſtrangers, than from the Britiſh troops, over whom their only ſuperiority was in the exerciſe of rapine. None of theſe had yet ſuffered themſelves to be ſurprized in ſo careleſs and unſoldierlike a manner.

Such were the ideas and reflections of the Americans upon this occurrence. The report of it was ſoon ſpread with the utmoſt care and diligence throughout the continent, in order to animate the

people, and recall them from their late depreſſion. It produced inſtantaneous effects in the parts adjacent to Philadelphia. Numbers of the moſt reſolute and able bodied men in Pennſylvania, joined their countrymen who were already with General Waſhington; and they all behaved with particular bravery in the laborious operations that took place during the enſuing winter.

Nor were the contiguous Provinces deficient in their aſſiſtance upon this emergency. The criticalneſs of it was obvious to all the Provincial Aſſemblies, and they neglected nothing that could tend to ſo neceſſary a ſervice as that in which their General was ſo deeply engaged. Thoſe Provinces from which he derived the moſt effectual aid, were thoſe of Virginia and Maryland: the firſt ſupplied him with a good body of rifle-men; the ſecond, with ſome regiments compoſed of the beſt men that could be drafted from the regiments on their eſtabliſhment.

The alarm and concern occaſioned at New York by this affair, was equal to the ſurprize and indignation which was felt by the commander in chief. The chain of cantonments had been ſo diſpoſed that nothing but an unpardonable negligence, could have expoſed any of them to be inſulted by the enemy with impunity. The advanced poſts, eſpecially, were ſo ſtrong, and the communication between them ſo quick and eaſy, that the efforts of a broken and ſcattered enemy could not poſſibly have made any impreſſion upon them, had they exerted the leaſt vigilance.

This unfortunate affair was attended by further conſequences, that proved very detrimental to the intereſt of Britain in America: it much diminiſhed, if it did not entirely remove, the terror with which the Provincials had hitherto beheld the Heſſians;

ted the eſteem which the Britiſh troops had conceived for them, and leſſened the confidence with which they had been relied upon before.

The Americans began now to revive on every ſide. Reinforcements came in to General Waſhington from various parts, and he again found himſelf at the head of an army. He now repaſſed the Delaware, and took up his quarters at Trenton. Lord Cornwallis, who was purpoſing to return to England, was, upon this intelligence, obliged to haſten back to the Jerſeys; and General Grant moved with all ſpeed from Brunſwick to Princetown, with all the troops that were ſtationed in thoſe parts.

The Americans were ſtrongly poſted at Trenton Creek, the bridge in their front, with other paſſes well defended with cannon. Lord Cornwallis advanced upon them with all expeditiouſneſs, intending to attack them before they had completed their works. Several ſkirmiſhes enſued, followed by a very ſevere cannonade on both ſides; but the poſt had been ſo ſtrengthened, that notwithſtanding a very ſpirited attack, it could not be carried.

Darkneſs put an end to the engagement, which was intended to be renewed the next morning. But General Waſhington, whoſe intention it was to decline it, reſolved, in the mean time, to make a ſecond trial, in the nature of that wherein he had ſo well ſucceeded at Trenton.

A Britiſh brigade was ſtationed at Maidenhead, a town ſituated half way between Trenton and Princetown, where Colonel Mawhood lay with the ſeventeenth, fortieth, and fifty-fifth regiments. He had halted here in his march from Brunſwick, and was to ſet out early the next morning. This body of men General Waſhington propoſed to come upon by ſurpriz[illegible] while at a diſtance from relief, hoping to capture them in the ſame manner as he had done the Heſſians at Trenton.

To this intent it was neceſſary that he ſhould deceive thoſe who were encamped oppoſite to him, by ſeeming to remain in his own camp. The fires were kept up, parties left to go the rounds, and a detachment left to guard the bridge and the paſſes.—With the remainder he decamped in the profoundeſt ſilence, during the dead of night; and taking a large circuit, to avoid the brigade at Maidenhead, he fell in next morning with Colonel Mawhood, who had begun his march at break of day, and was advancing on the road to Maidenhead. The hazineſs of the weather, and the unevenneſs of the ground, prevented the Colonel from diſcovering the numbers of the enemy. Their van firſt attacked him, but this was eaſily repulſed; and he continued his march, not expecting farther moleſtation.

But General Waſhington having arranged his force ſo as to aſſail him on both ſides, he was again furiouſly attacked, and ſhortly ſurrounded. He found, by the repeated diſcharges that were made where the fifty-fifth regiment was following him, that it was in the ſame ſituation.

On the clearing up of the fog, he perceived the great ſuperiority of the force that encountered him, and that he was cut off from the other regiments.—Nothing could extricate him but the moſt deſperate efforts; they were made accordingly: the regiment charged the enemy with their bayonets, and by dint of the moſt extraordinary valour, forced their way through them, and marched forwards to Maidenhead.

The fifty-fifth regiment behaved with no leſs reſolution: finding it impracticable to join the ſeventeenth regiment with Colonel Mawhood, they retired in excellent order; and notwithſtanding the violence with which they were attacked, they made good their retreat to Brunſwick.

The fortieth regiment, which had not begun its march when the two others were attacked, determined to fight its way back in the ſame manner as the fifty-fifth. It was aſſailed by the Americans with great impetuoſity, and its fate remained ſome time undecided; but it was equally ſucceſsful with the two others, and found means to retire with ſafety, and even with ſmaller loſs.

In theſe three ſeparate engagements, the Britiſh troops behaved with an intrepidity and a coolneſs of diſcipline, which excited the admiration, and even the praiſe of the Americans. Happening ſo cloſe upon the affair of the Heſſians at Trenton, it occaſioned compariſons between their behaviour and that of the Britiſh troops, that were very unfavourable to the former. There was no occaſion, the Americans ſaid, of going to Germany in ſearch of ſoldiers, at ſo enormous a price: experience ſhowed that much better were to be found at home.

From this period, the Americans conſidered the Heſſians as much leſs formidable than the Britiſh troops, and always expreſſed leſs apprehenſions when any military operation was committed to them. They repreſented them as a heavy and tardy people, not deficient in courage and military patience and diſcipline, but wanting in diligence, and activity: they ſtood their ground, but their motions were of a nature that would rather prevent a defeat, than gain a victory.

Whether theſe repreſentations were well or ill founded, certain it is, that an antipathy, mixed with contempt, prevailed among the Americans with reſpect of the Heſſians: it laſted the whole war, and is not forgotten at this day.

Notwithſtanding the American General miſcarried in his original deſign, yet the ſpirit with which it had been attempted, and the bravery diſplayed

in the late conflicts by the American troops, did both him and them great honour. The difficulty of maintaining posts so far in the enemy's country, obliged the Royal army to retire from the banks of the Delaware, and to move towards Brunswick, in order to prevent it, with the troops and magazines lodged there, from falling into the power of the enemy. Lord Cornwallis made several motions to draw them to an engagement; but General Washington did not chuse to commit the advantages he had gained to the chance of a battle, which might in one day deprive him of what it had cost him many to obtain.

But while he declined an engagement, he was not the less active in recovering what had been lost in the Jerseys. Dividing his army into detachments, that could be re-united in a few hour's notice, he spread them, as it were, over the Province. As they met with every support and assistance which a people, irritated to the highest degree against a retreating enemy could afford to their deliverers, they quickly repossessed themselves of all the posts of importance in the interior parts of the country, and at last extended themselves to the very shores in sight of Staten Island. Here they posted themselves so advantageously, and fortified every place they had retaken so strongly, that considering the severity of the season, and the consequent difficulty of the service, it became impracticable to dislodge them at the present. The only places that remained in the possession of the British army in the whole Province of Jersey, were Amboy, situated on a neck of land at the mouth of the Rariton, and Brunswick, a little way higher on the same river. What prevented the enemy from seizing them, as he had done the rest, was that they were open to the shipping, and at hand to be immediately and effectually supported

The ſuddenneſs of this recovery of the American affairs from a ſtate of ſo much diſtreſs, to ſuch unlooked for proſperity, was a matter of utter aſtoniſhment to all the world. In Britain it was preſumed that the war was partly at an end, and that a few finiſhing ſtrokes would terminate the buſineſs in the courſe of the next campaign. It was therefore with equal grief and aſtoniſhment they were informed that General Waſhington had extricated himſelf from the difficulties which it was firmly believed, he could not poſſibly ſurmount; that by his activity and dextrous management, he had compelled the Britiſh troops to withdraw from the neighbourhood of Philadelphia, and to evacuate the Province of Jerſey; that he was in ſome reſpects become maſter of the field; and was again at the head of a formidable body of men, with which he made continual incurſions into the country round the Britiſh out quarters, and that theſe were ſo ſtraitened, that they were obliged to be perpetually on their guard to prevent ſurpriſe.

Now it was, that people began to diſmiſs thoſe ſanguine expectations of a ſpeedy reduction of America, which had been ſo predominant during the laſt campaign. The ſucceſſes that had attended it had appeared ſo brilliant, and the termination of it ſo promiſing, that they had flattered themſelves with the completeſt iſſue to the plan of conqueſt that had been adopted, and expreſſed much regret at its not having been proſecuted ſooner. The diſſolution of the American army was looked upon as an infallible proof that the Colonies were already weary of the conteſt, and deſirous of giving it over. Aſcribing it to other cauſes than the true one, they were perſuaded that a deficiency of finances, and a general deſpondency had occaſioned it; and that little or no reſiſtance would henceforward be made. The warmth with which people had cheriſhed theſe ideas, was not

when they found how wrongly their notions had been founded.

Nor were the European nations leſs ſurpriſed at this unexpected intelligence from America. They had in a manner given up the hopes they had formed in favour of the Coloniſts. The maritime ſtrength of Britain, the courage and ſuperior diſcipline of her troops, the aſſiſtance of auxiliaries, deemed as brave a people as any in Germany, and whoſe chief profeſſion is that of war, and, above all the prodigious reſources of the Britiſh government; all theſe were motives that inclined multitudes to think that the Colonies would not be able to ſtand a long conteſt. Others, indeed, relying on the accounts given of the internal ſituation of the country, had conceived another opinion. They conjectured, that the many obſtructions formed by the hand of Nature to military operations in America, would, of themſelves, retard the progreſs of the Britiſh arms, and combat effectually for the Americans. But the tranſactions of the laſt campaign had ſtaggered them, and they too began to coincide with the general perſuaſion, that America muſt at laſt ſubmit to Britain.

Though their wiſhes continued as ſtrong and fervent as ever on the ſide of America, yet their hopes were become very faint, when the news of the ſudden ſucceſs of General Waſhington arrived in Europe. No intelligence could be more welcome: they received it as if they had been as deeply concerned, and were to be as much benefited by it as the Americans themſelves. It revived the drooping ſpirits of all the numerous enemies to Britain. Such as had doubted of the ability of the Colonies to reſiſt her, now embraced the contrary belief; and ſuch as had imagined from the natural impediments which would ariſe, that a ſubjugation of them was

All apprehenſions vaniſhed on account of America, and ſhe was unanimouſly pronounced to be out of all danger with reſpect to Britain.

The name of General Waſhington now became famous over all Europe. The difficulties he had ſtruggled with, the ſpirit and abilities he had manifeſted, his perſeverance in the midſt of ſo many diſcouragements, his patience under the moſt afflicting preſſures, his vigilance in watching for opportunities to overcome them, his conduct in improving them to the utmoſt,—all theſe were juſt motives to place him in a moſt ſplendid and reſpectable light. He was every where extolled as the ſaviour of his country, and as an honour to that part of the world where he was born. America was compared to Rome, when driven to the laſt extremities by the victorious arms of Hannibal; and the appellation of Fabius, who reſcued her from deſtruction, was now univerſally applied to General Waſhington.

In this general enthuſiaſm of the European nations in the cauſe of America, it was however allowed that no diſgrace had befallen the armies of Britain. They had behaved upon every occaſion with an intrepidity that was acknowledged even by their enemies. But it was evident that the local diſadvantages againſt them were ſo many, that no generalſhip or valour could counteract them. The irregularity of the land, interſected by ſuch variety of bars and impediments to military operations, formed, as it were, a perpetual chain of ramparts againſt all attacks: the means of defence were ſupplied by nature, and were too numerous and powerful to be overcome by the exertions of art.

Thus circumſtanced, though neither ſkill nor bravery were wanting on the part of the Britiſh commanders and troops, ſtill they were exerciſed

through their hands, the moment they moved from one part of it, in order to ſecure another. It was experimentally found, that none but armies of the moſt prodigious magnitude would ſuffice for ſuch a ſyſtem of hoſtilities, as were indiſpenſibly neceſſary to make a ſucceſsful impreſſion upon America.—But had Britain been able to raiſe and tranſport ſuch armies to America, they muſt have been famiſhed for want of ſubſiſtence. It was with the utmoſt difficulty that proviſions were procured for the Britiſh forces already there, and it would not be poſſible to ſupport a larger number. The fertility of the country was no reſource, as the inhabitants were maſters of all its productions, and uſed all manner of care and induſtry to withhold them from, or to render them of no ſervice to their aggreſſors. This was an obſtacle which no allurements of gain would ſurmount. They had been tried, but the hatred and animoſity of the natives had fruſtrated them, and had cut off every hope of ſucceeding by ſuch methods. Thoſe of force were the only that remained; but the blood that was ſhed to make them effectual, was a price that too frequently exceeded their value. Such were the allegations of numbers.

The Americans, it was ſaid, poſſeſſed the genius and capacity of the European nations from which they were deſcended, together with the temper and diſpoſition of the original natives of the continent which they inhabited. From the firſt they derived the ſtrength of mind, vivacity of action, and the promptitude to learn and improve, which give the Europeans ſo decided a ſuperiority over all other people: from the ſecond, they acquired that patience and fortitude which ſo peculiarly characteriſe the American Indians. From theſe mixed qualities,

verance in their undertakings, that rendered them a dangerous foe to encounter, to whatever ſtraits they might be reduced.

Oppoſed in this inceſſant manner by every imaginable difficulty, the difference of a climate, wherein the weather is ſubject to ſuch extremities of change, a country full of internal obſtructions, and a people inflexibly bent to reſiſt them to the laſt, and abounding in means to haraſs and perplex them in every ſhape, it was often ſaid, the utmoſt that could be expected from the Britiſh troops in ſuch a ſituation, would be to behave like men of courage, and to preſerve their honour.

The manner of carrying on the war was perfectly ſuited to the character of the Americans; full of acuteneſs and circumſpection, and fertile in contrivances and ſtratagems. Hence every poſt that was tenable, was fortified in the moſt judicious manner, and defended with equal obſtinacy.—Inſtead of regular engagements, for which the enemy might have time to prepare, ſudden encounters were ſought, wherein, if they obtained no other advantage, they were ſure of waſting the ſtrength of the enemy, who muſt be recruited from an immenſe diſtance, while their loſs would be ſupplied without delay. Depending upon ſurpriſals, they were indefatigable in exploring and making the beſt uſe of opportunities to that intent; this, of courſe, fatigued the attention of their antagoniſts, and kept them in continual alarms.

Repreſentations of this kind took place equally abroad and at home. Here, indeed, the warmth of thoſe who had avowedly diſapproved of an American war, became notorious. They now inſiſted upon the rectitude of the many arguments they had alledged againſt it; all which, they now ſaid, were verified by the faireſt experience. They admoniſh-

from an enterprise, from which it had so often been predicted, and facts now made it evident, that no success could reasonably be expected. The calamities with which it had been accompanied were great, but they were nothing to those that would follow, if those who begun, still obstinately persisted in such ruinous measures. Before a trial of them had been made, they had justly been pronounced hazardous in the extreme; but now that their fatality was unquestionable, it would be unpardonable in men who pretended to have the public welfare at heart, to purse them any longer.

CHAP. XXIII.

Articles of Confederacy between the United Colonies.—Indians defeated by the Americans.—Winter Campaign in the Jerseys.

1776.

DURING the operations that were carried on by the British army under General Howe, and the American army under General Washington; the Congress determined to put the last hand to that system of confederacy, upon which the Colonies had established their union.

Articles of confederation had been entered into the preceding year; but they were temporary and conditional; and still supposed a reconciliation might take place between Great Britain and her Colonies,

But now that a determination had been solemnly embraced to renounce all dependance upon Great Britain, and to erect the Colonies into Free and Sovereign States, it became necessary to frame a settled and permanent form of union among them, abstracted from all ideas of any political connection with the parent state, that should imply subordination.

To this intent, another set of articles was drawn up by a committee of the Congress, appointed for that purpose. They underwent a long discussion, and were weighed, line after line, by the Congress itself, and were at length approved and resolved upon by all the delegates, who signed them in a solemn manner on the fourth of October.

In

In the former articles they called themſelves the the United Colonies; but in the preſent inſtrument they took the title of the United States of America.

They contracted by the preſent conſtitution, a reciproeal treaty of union and friendſhip for their common defence, for the maintenance of their liberties, and for their general and mutual advantage; obliging themſelves to aſſiſt each other againſt any violence that might threaten all, or any of them, and to repel in common all the attacks that might be levelled againſt all, or any of them, on account of religion, ſovereignty, commerce, or under any other pretext whatever.

Each ſtate reſerved to itſelf alone the excluſive right of regulating its internal government, and of framing laws in all matters that were not included in the articles of the preſent confederation, and which could not any way be prejudicial to it.

No ſtate in particular, was either to ſend or to receive embaſſies, enter into negociations, contract engagements, form alliances, or conclude treaties with any king, prince, or power whatſoever, without the conſent of the United States aſſembled in General Congreſs.

No perſon inveſted with any poſt whatever, under the authority of the united States, or of any of them, whether he had appointments belonging to his employment, or whether it ſhould be a commiſſion purely confidential, was allowed to accept of any preſents, gratuities, emoluments, nor any offices, or titles of any kind whatever, from any kings, pringes, or foreign powers.

Neither the General Aſſembly of the United States, nor any ſtate in particular, was to confer any title of nobility.

The ſtates were not to form alliances, or confederations, nor conclude any private treaty among themſelves, without the conſent of the United

States assembled in General Congress, and without the intent and duration of that private convention being exactly specified in the consent.

No state was to lay on any impost, nor establish any duties whatever, the effect of which might alter directly or indirectly the clauses of the treaties that might hereafter be concluded by the Assembly of the United States, with any kings, princes, or powers.

No state, in particular, was to keep any ships of war above the number judged necessary by the Assembly of the United States, for the defence of that state and its commerce; and none of the states were to keep on foot, in time of peace, any troops above the number determined by the Assembly of the United States, to guard the strong places or forts necessary for the defence of that state. But each state was always to keep up a well disciplined militia, sufficiently armed and equipped, and was carefully to procure, and keep in constant readiness in the public magazines, a sufficient number of field pieces, and tents, with a proper quantity of ammunition and implements of war.

When any of the states raised troops for the common defence, all the officers of the rank of Colonel, and under, were to be appointed by the legislative body of the state where the troops were raised, or in such manner as that state should judge proper to regulate the nominations; and when any vacancy happened in these posts, it was to be filled up by that state.

All the expences of war, and all other disbursements to be made for the common defence of the general weal, and that were ordered by the Assembly of the United States, were to be paid out of the funds of a common treasury.

That common treasury was to be formed by the

the number of inhabitants, of every age, ſex, or quality, except the Indians exempt from taxes in each ſtate; and in order to fix the quota of the contribution, every three years the inhabitants were to be numbered; in which enumeration the number of white people was to be diſtinguiſhed, and that enumeration was to be ſent to the Aſſembly of the United States.

The taxes appropriated to pay this quota, were to be raiſed and levied in the extent of each ſtate, by the authority and order of its legiſlative body, within the time fixed by the Aſſembly of the United States.

Each of the ſtates was to ſubmit to the deciſion of the Aſſembly of the United States, in all matters or queſtions reſerved to that Aſſembly by the preſent act of confederation.

No ſtate was to engage in war without the conſent of the United States aſſembled in Congreſs, except in caſe of actual invaſion of ſome enemy, or from a certain knowledge of a reſolution taken by ſome Indian nation, to attack them; and in that caſe only, in which the danger was too urgent to allow them time to conſult the other ſtates.

No particular ſtate was to give any commiſſion to veſſels, or other ſhips of war, nor any letters of marque or repriſal, till after a declaration of war, made by the Aſſembly of the United States; and in that caſe they were to be granted only againſt the kingdom or power againſt which war ſhould have been declared; and they were to conform reſpecting theſe objects, to the regulations made by the Aſſembly of the United States.

In order to watch over the general intereſt of the United States, and direct the general affairs, a certain number of Delegates was to be nominated every year, according to the form ſettled by the legiſla-

delphia, until the General Assembly of the United States should order otherwise; and the first Monday in November of each year, was to be the time fixed for their meeting.

Each of the states was to preserve the right and power to recall, at any time whatever of the year, their Delegates, or any one of them, and to send others in the room of them for the remainder of the year; and each of the said states was to maintain their Delegates during the time of the General Assembly, and also during the time they were members of the council of state.

Each state was to have a vote for the decision of questions in the General Assembly.

The General Assembly of the United States, was alone and exclusively, to have the right and power to decide of peace and war; to establish rules for judging, in all cases, the lawfulness of the prizes taken by sea or land; and to determine the manner in which the prizes taken by the land or sea forces in the service of the United States, should be divided or employed; to grant letters of marque or reprisal in time of peace; to appoint tribunals to take cognizance of piracies, and all other capital crimes committed on the high seas; to establish tribunals to receive appeals, and judge finally in all cases of prizes; to send and receive ambassadors; to negotiate and conclude treaties and alliances; to decide all differences actually subsisting, and that might arise hereafter between any of the states, about limits, jurisdiction, or any other cause whatsoever; to coin money, and fix its value and standard; to fix the weights and measures throughout the whole extent of the United States; to regulate commerce, and treat of all affairs with the Indians who were not members of any of the states; to establish and regulate the posts from one

United States; and to receive, on the letters and packets ſent by poſt, the neceſſary tax to defray the expence of that eſtabliſhment; to appoint the general officers of the land forces in the ſervice of the United States; to give commiſſions to the other officers appointed by each ſtate; to appoint all the officers of marine in the ſervice of the United States; to frame all the ordinances neceſſary for the government and diſcipline of the land and ſea forces, and to direct their operations.

The General Aſſembly of the United States, was to be authoriſed to appoint a council of ſtate, and ſuch committees and civil officers as they ſhall judge neceſſary for guiding and diſpatching the general affairs under their authority, while they remain ſitting; and after their ſeparation, under the authority of the council of ſtate.

They were to chuſe for preſident one of their members; and for ſecretary, the perſon whom they ſhould judge fit for that place; and they were to adjourn at what time of the year, and to what place in the United States they might think proper.

They were to have the right and power to determine and fix the ſums neceſſary to be raiſed, and the diſburſements neceſſary to be made; to borrow money, and to create bills on the credit of the United States; to build and fit out fleets; to determine the number of troops to be raiſed, or kept in pay; and to require of each of the ſtates, in order to compoſe the army, a contingent proportioned to the number of its white inhabitants: theſe requiſitions of the General Aſſembly, were to be binding; and in conſequence, the legiſlative body of each ſtate, was to nominate the particular officers, levy the men, arm and equip them properly; and thoſe officers and ſoldiers, thus armed and equipped, were to proceed to the place, and within the time fixed by the General Aſſembly.

But if the General Assembly, from some particular circumstances, should think proper to exempt one or several of the states from raising troops, or to demand of them less than their contingent; or should, on the contrary, judge it convenient that one, or several others, should raise more than their contingent, the number extraordinarily demanded was to be raised, provided with officers, armed and equipped in the same manner as the contingent, unless the legislative body of that, or of those states to whom the requisition should have been made, should deem it dangerous for themselves to be drained of that number extraordinary, in which case they were to furnish no more than what they might think compatible with their safety.

The General Assembly was never to engage in any war, nor grant letters of marque or reprisal in time of peace, nor contract any treaties of alliance, or other conventions, except to make peace, nor coin money, or regulate its value, nor determine or fix the sums necessary to be raised, or the disbursements necessary to be made for the defence or advantage of the United States, or of any of them, nor create bills, or borrow money on the credit of the United States, nor dispose of any sums of money, nor resolve on the number of ships of war to be built, or purchased, nor on the number of troops to be raised for the land or sea service, but by the united consent of Nine of the States; and no question on any point whatsoever, except for adjourning from one day to another, shall be decided but by a majority of the United States.

No Delegate to be chosen for more than three years out of six.

No person invested with any employment whatsoever, in the extent of the United States, and receiving by virtue of that employment, either by

ſalaries, wages, or emoluments whatever, could be choſen a Delegate.

The General Aſſembly was to publiſh every month, a journal of their ſeſſions, except what related to treaties, alliances, or military operations, when it appeared to them that theſe matters ought to be kept ſecret. The opinions *pro* and *con.* of the Delegates of each ſtate, were to be entered in the journals as often as any one of the Delegates ſhould require it; and a copy of the journal was to be delivered to the Delegates of each ſtate, on their demand, or even to any one of the Delegates of each ſtate at his particular requiſition, except of the parts above mentioned, to be carried to the legiſlative body of his reſpective ſtate.

The council of ſtate was to be compoſed of one Delegate of each of the ſtates, nominated annually by the other Delegates of his reſpective ſtate, and ſhould theſe electors diſagree, that Delegate ſhall nominated by the General Aſſembly.

The council of ſtate was to be authoriſed to receive and open all the letters addreſſed to the United States and anſwer them; but was not to contract any engagement binding to the United States: they were to correſpond with the legiſlative body of each ſtate, and with all perſons employed under the authority of the United States, or of any of the particular legiſlative bodies; they were to addreſs themſelves to theſe legiſlative bodies, or to the officers to whom each ſtate ſhall have intruſted the executive power, for aid and aſſiſtance of every kind, as occaſion ſhall require; they were to give inſtructions to the generals, and direct the military operations by land or by ſea; but without making any alterations in the objects or expeditions determined by the General Aſſembly, unleſs a change of circumſtances intervening, and coming to their knowledge, ſince the breaking up of the Aſſembly.

should render a change of measures indispensably necessary; they were to be careful of the defence and preservation of the fortresses and fortified posts; to procure information of the situation and designs of the enemy; to put into execution the plans and measures resolved upon by the General Assembly, by virtue of the powers with which they were invested by the present confederation; they were to draw upon the treasurers for the sums, the destination of which had been settled by the General Assembly; and for the payment of the contracts which they might have made by virtue of the powers granted to them; they were to inspect and reprove, or even to suspend all officers civil or military, acting under the authority of the United States. In case of death or suspension of any officer, whose nomination belonged to the General Assembly, they might replace him by what person they should think proper, until the next Assembly; they might publish and disperse authentic accounts of the military operations; they might convene the General Assembly for a nearer term than that to which they had adjourned when they separated, if any important and unexpected event should require it for the welfare of the United States, or of any of them; they were to prepare the matters to be submitted to the inspection of the General Assembly, and lay before them at the next sitting, all the letters or advices by them received, and to render an exact account of all that they had done in the interim; they were to take for their secretary a person fit for that employment, who, before he entered on his function, should take an oath of secrecy and fidelity: the presence of seven members of the council was to empower them to act. In case of the death of one of their members, the council was to give notice of it to the colleagues of the deceased, that they might chuse one of themselves to replace him in

the council, until the holding of the next General Meeting; and in caſe there ſhould be but one of his colleagues living, the ſame notice ſhould be given to him, that he might come and take his ſeat until the next ſitting.

In caſe that Canada ſhould be willing to accede to the preſent confederation, and come into all the meaſures of the United States, it was to be admitted into the union, and participate in all its benefits; but no other Colony was to be admitted, without the conſent of nine of the ſtates.

The above articles were to be propoſed to the legiſlative bodies of all the United States, to be examined by them; and if approved of, they were to authoriſe their Delegates to ratify them in the General Aſſembly; after which all the articles which conſtitute the preſent confederacy, were to be inviolably obſerved by all the United States, and the union to be eſtabliſhed for ever.

No alteration was to be made hereafter in any of theſe articles, unleſs that alteration ſhould be previouſly determined upon in the General Aſſembly, and confirmed afterwards by the legiſlative bodies of each of the United States.

Such was the tenour of the famous Treaty of Confederation and perpetual Union between the Thirteen Colonies. It followed at the diſtance of three months preciſely, the no leſs celebrated declaration of Independency; and like that, it was agreed upon at a time when their fate was yet in ſuſpenſe. It may even be ſaid, that this latter determination was adopted at a ſtill more dangerous criſis than the preceding. Their armies had been repeatedly defeated, and were retreating every where before the enemy. So much reſolution and conſtancy was an object of no ſmall ſurprize in Europe. Their favourers compared their behaviour to that of the ancient Romans, when almoſt van-

quiſhed by Pirrhus, and who, in the midſt of the ſevereſt defeats and loſſes, never ſubmitted to deſpondency, and ſtill continued to bid him defiance.

It was not only with Britiſh troops and their European auxiliaries the Congreſs had now to contend; a domeſtic enemy had been excited to invade the territories of the Colonies, in a part which was conſidered as the leaſt defenſible.

The Britiſh agents among the Indians, had long exerted their endeavours to bring them into the conteſt, as allies to Britain. Through the vigilance and addreſs of thoſe who had been employed by the Congreſs to prevent ſuch a meaſure from taking place, it had been reiteratedly defeated, and a plan of amity between the Indian nations and the Coloniſts had been ſettled upon terms equally acceptable to both. But notwithſtanding theſe ſucceſſive failures, the zeal and activity of the Britiſh agents did not abate. They were experimentally acquainted with the ficklenefs of theſe people, and with their readineſs to concur in any enterprize from whence profit was to ariſe. By dint of ſeaſonable preſents, and by holding out to them the proſpect of the immenſe booty that would fall into their poſſeſſion, they induced them to take up arms in the cauſe of Britain.

In order to encourage them by the probability of ſucceſs, they laid before them the ſcheme of action that was to be purſued upon this occaſion. A conſiderable force was to be ſent to Weſt Florida, which was to march through the country of the Creeks, Chickeſaws, and Cherokees. Strengthened by the warriors of thoſe nations, this force was to fall upon Virginia and the Carolinas, and thus diſtract the attention of the Coloniſts, while the Britiſh armaments were invading the ſea coaſts.

But the Indians were not the only ſupport relied upon in this undertaking. It was to be forwarded by the co-operation of others, in whom a ſtill

greater dependance might be placed. Circular letters were diſtributed among the well-affected to the Britiſh government in the back ſettlements, acquainting them with the preparations that were making againſt the Colonies, and exhorting them to ſecond a deſign that ſeemed to promiſe the ſureſt ſucceſs. The other inhabitants in general were ſummoned to join the adherents to Britain, with promiſes of the kindeſt treatment in caſe of their compliance; but warning them at the ſame time, of the certain and inevitable miſeries they would ſuffer, in caſe of a refuſal. They were required to repair to the place where the royal ſtandard was to be erected, together with their horſes, their cattle, and as large a ſtock of proviſion as they could collect; for all which they ſhould be generouſly paid. In the mean time, a ſubſcription to a paper declaring their allegiance, was demanded, that it might be known who were the friends or the enemies to Britain.

Thoſe who conducted this buſineſs, did it ſo effectually, that an extenſive inſurrection followed in conſequence of it, among the Indians. Won by the plauſibility of a plan that offered them ſuch great advantages, they eaſily forgot the engagements they had formed with the Colonies, and entered heartily into a confederacy againſt them. Even their ancient friends, the Six Nations, ſwerved from their fidelity on this occaſion; and numbers of them were induced, by the hopes of plunder, to join their enemies.

This Indian inſurrection commenced among the Creeks, a fierce and rapacious people, whoſe hoſtilities were accompanied with thoſe dreadful perpetrations of barbarity, that render an Indian war ſo terrible to all that are expoſed to its conſequences. In expectation of being powerfully ſeconded, they proceeded with great violence and impetuoſity

in their incurſions; but finding themſelves unſupported, and knowing that if they were left alone, they would quickly be overpowered, they held a conſultation, wherein it was agreed among their Chiefs, to deſiſt, and to apply for peace to thoſe whom they had offended. It was fortunate for the Congreſs that this tribe had begun hoſtilities before they were joined by the others, and had for that reaſon deſerted them: this aſſembly wiſely diſſembled the injury, and quickly concluded a treaty of peace with them.

Their neighbours, the Cherokees, having completed their preparations, ſent a meſſage to inform them, that they were marching againſt the enemy, and expected their aſſiſtance; but the Creeks returned them anſwer, that they had buried the hatchet ſo deep, that it could not be found. The Cherokees, however, proceeded without them, and invaded the back ſettlements in a variety of places, ſpreading maſſacre and deſolation every where.

This barbarous incurſion was not of long duration. The Colonies of Virginia and Carolina aſſembling a large body of militia, haſted with all ſpeed to the relief of their countrymen. They attacked the Indians with great bravery, and defeated them in every encounter with prodigious ſlaughter. They drove them out of all the frontier ſettlements, and purſued them into their own country; where they deſtroyed all their habitations, and burned all their fields of corn and other proviſions. The ruin and devaſtation was ſuch, that the Cherokee nation was in a manner exterminated: what remained was glad to accept of any terms the Coloniſts thought proper to impoſe upon them.

A ſucceſs ſo complete and deciſive, put an end to all apprehenſions from the other Indians. Dreading the fate of the Cherokees, they

continued quiet at home, and gave up all thoughts of the projected expedition. The cruelties that had been exercised by these savage warriors, gave such universal offence to all parties, that both the well and ill-affected to the British cause, concurred in expressing the utmost abhorrence of such a manner of carrying on hostilities, and in condemning those who had promoted this Indian invasion. The consequence was, that numbers of the adherents to Britain, determined to renounce all such measures in future; as experience had proved them to be fruitless, and as they were entirely repugnant to humanity.

This total deliverance from the fears which had so long alarmed the inhabitants of the interior and remote parts of the Colonies, was an event of the utmost consequence to the Americans. It answered two ends; it showed that the Indians were not so formidable as they had been represented, and that they might easily be repulsed; and it removed at the same time, all apprehensions that they might be aided by those among the Colonists who were disaffected to the measures of Congress.

This security to their back-settlements, was a circumstance the more desirable, as it enabled Congress to turn the whole of their attention to those operations that were immediately under their eye.—Had they been obliged to provide for the defence of those distant places, while they were so closely pressed by the British armies towards the close of the campaign, their distress might possibly have been too great to be remedied. But having now no internal foe to oppose, they were quite at liberty to improve those advantages which General Washington had gained towards the end of that year, and the commencement of the ensuing.

He was now busily employed in the Jerseys in harassing the out-posts of the British army, and pre-

venting ſupplies from coming to the forces at New York. The troops ſtationed on the Jerſey coaſt underwent the ſevereſt duty; they were day and night conſtrained to keep an inceſſant look-out; ſkirmiſhes followed each other in perpetual ſucceſſion: they were in the iſſue very deſtructive; for though few might fall at a time, yet the total amount of them that fell in ſo many, was very conſiderable. They bore their ſituation with great firmneſs and patience, and endured all the hardſhips of a long winter, increaſed by the fatigue of unceaſing hoſtilities, with the ſame courage and fortitude as they had done at Boſton a twelvemonth before.

But though they maintained the poſts that remained to them in the Jerſeys, they could not prevent the Americans from reaping the greateſt benefit they could propoſe at this time. Theſe continual encounters contributed to inure the Coloniſts to military diſcipline, and to prepare them for the operations of the next campaign, which General Waſhington reaſonably imagined would be very extenſive and important. To this purpoſe, he loſt no opportunity of bringing the Americans to action as often as it could be done without riſking too much. By this prudent management, he found them at the opening of the ſpring ſo much improved in the various branches of warfare, as to afford him a well-grounded expectation of being able to face the Britiſh armies, if not with ſucceſs, at leaſt in ſuch a manner, as would not reflect diſgrace upon America.

The reſentment occaſioned by the depredations that had been carried on in the Jerſeys, had left few, if any, friends to Britain in that Province.—The dread of ſeeing thoſe plunderers return, who had ſpared neither friend nor foe, rendered all parties averſe to the cauſe in which they were employed. To this it was owing, that their motions were

ſtood little or no chance of ſucceeding in any of their enterpriſes. So many had ſuffered through them, that there was no deficiency of ſpies to give inſtant information of whatever they were ſuſpected to have in view; and as much miſchief was done them by ſuch as acted ſecretly from motives of private revenge, as by thoſe who took an open part againſt them in the field.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

Diſtreſs of the Weſt Indies—Loſſes by American Privateers—Attempt of John the Painter—Parliamentary Debates relating to America—State and Sentiments of the Nation.

1776.

IT had been frequently predicted, both in Parliament and elſewhere, that in caſe of hoſtilities with America, the Weſt India iſlands would be involved in great diſtreſs. That prediction began now to be fulfilled in all its parts. From the deprivation of thoſe numberleſs ſupplies with which they were furniſhed from the American continent, all the neceſſaries of life became ſo ſcarce, as to riſe to four or five times their former price. The negroes, and the inferior claſſes of white people, ſuffered greatly on this occaſion. Materials of indiſpenſible uſe for the buſineſs of their plantations, were not to be procured at any rate, and a ſtagnation enſued that became a moſt ſerious object of alarm. Had it not been for the adventitious help that aroſe from the capture of American veſſels, famine and abſolute ruin, muſt inevitably have been the fate of the Weſt India iſlands.

But if the Americans were loſers in this reſpect, they made themſelves amends by ſeizing numbers of the Britiſh ſhips home laden from thoſe iſlands with rich cargoes. Herein they were favoured by a variety of circumſtances, reſulting from winds, weather, and ſeaſons. An accident happened in particular during the courſe of this year, which proved highly

The negroes in Jamaica had formed a conſpiracy againſt the white inhabitants. As part of the military force uſually ſtationed on that iſland had been drafted off to America, the few ſoldiers that remained were not ſufficient to keep the negroes in awe. They had determined to riſe upon their maſters as ſoon as a large fleet of merchant-men was ſailed that was then loading with ſugars in the different ports of the iſland. Fortunately for the inhabitants, the plot was diſcovered and ſuppreſſed; but until the danger had entirely ſubſided, the fleet was detained, and did not depart until after the cuſtomary time. By this retardment, it ſailed at a ſeaſon that was accompanied with much tempeſtuous weather, which ſcattered the ſhips, ſeparated them from their convoy, and expoſed them to the American cruiſers that were lying in wait for them in the latitudes through which they were to paſs in their voyage homewards. Notice had been received in America of the detention of the merchant-men at Jamaica, and they had employed the time given them by this delay, in fitting out a large number of ſtout privateers to intercept them. The conſequence was, that many of the ſhips compoſing this fleet were taken, and proved valuable prizes to the enemy.

The trade from the other iſlands ſuffered proportionably; and it was computed in London, at the cloſe of the year ſeventy-ſix, that the loſſes of the merchants, and of government, by thoſe veſſels employed in its ſervice as tranſports for troops, or ſtores, amounted to little leſs than eleven hundred thouſand pounds.

The American privateers were at no loſs where to diſpoſe of theſe prizes. The ports of France and Spain, eſpecially the firſt, were open to them both in Europe and in their American dominions. Here they ſold them openly, without the leaſt hindrance or controul. Such an indignity was not, how-

THE WEST INDIES from the best AUTHORITIES.

British Miles 60 to a Degree.
50 150 250 350

MEXICO
GULF OF MEXICO
ATLANTIC OCEAN
LUCAYOS OR BAHAMA ISLES
FLORIDA
W. FLORIDA
EAST FLORIDA
STRAITS OF BAHAMA
Louisiana
New Orleans
Mobile B.
Pensacola F.
St. Marks
St. Augustine
B. St. Joseph
North Cape
Ascension B.
St. Bernards B.
Mouths of the Missisipi River
Apalaches Bay
Cayo St. Martin
Canaveral
Gerda Bar
Whale Chan.
Bahama
Lucayo
Anebote Key
Here Ferdinand Salo landed in 1539
Juan Ponce Bay
Bay St. Joseph
I. St. Joseph
Pracel
Esmut
Dry Tortuga
Cape Florida
Biminis
The Hole in the Rock
Alebaster I.
Eleuthera I.
Cat I.
Andros Isles
Providence
Exuma
Gr. Bank
Watling I.
Long I.
Cayo de Sal
Cayo de Gurneos
Bahama
Crooked I.
Mayaguana or Mogane
Tropic of Cancer
Tampico
Nigrilla
Bermeja
Arenas
Alacranes
Aquatlan
Baxo de Sancho Pardo
Florida R.
Havana
St. Carlos
C. de St. Antonio
C. de Coriente
C. de Guanat
I. de Pinez
Jardin del Rey
Cayo Romano
Fortune I.
Addins K.
Hogsties
Green I.
Gr. Key
North Key
Abreojo
Cayos de Plata or Silver Keys
Inagua I.
Caicos
Turks I.
Vigia
C. Condecedo
Sisal
Cayo
C. Catoche
Cad. I.
Womens I.
Merida
Plains without Water
Coast of Bacalar
Cozumell
Campeche
Bay of Campeche
Almeria
Pta Delgada
Pta de St. Martin
Lit. Cayman
Gr. Cayman
C. de Cruz
Spiritu Santo
Aguador B.
Jardin de la Reyna
Copper Mines
St. Jago
C. Mayzi
I. de la Tortue
Old Cape Francois
Samana
Cape Raphael
Porto Rico
VIRGIN ISLES
CARIBBEE ISLES
Anegada
Virgingorda
Anguilla
St. Martin
Barbuda
Misteriosa
Swan Isles
Luces Har
St. Anne Bay
Port Negril
Kingston
JAMAICA
Gr. Pt. Pedro
Spanish Old Harbour
Pt. Royal
Ile Cap
St. Juan
St. Louis
la Gonave
Port au Prince
St. Domingo
Pt. German
Porto Rico
Bonriquen
St. Cruz
St. Eustatia
St. Christopher
Redonda
Monserrat
Guadalupe
Mari Galante
Dominica
Martinico
Trinity I. & Bay
C. Salines
St. Lucia
St. Vincent
Barbadoes
Granada
Tobago
Aves I.
Rocca
Orchilla
Salt Tortuga
Margaritta
Testigos
Gr. Bank
Hecas del Brazo
C. Galera
TRINIDAD
Pta del Gallo
Orinoco Mouth
Tortola
Virgin I.s
Anegada
Passage
Abaco
la Vache
C. de la Beata
Saona I.
Mona
Bonriquen
Borriquen
Ascension Bay
Bay of Honduras
Porto Cavallo
Utila
Ruatan
Benaka
C. Honduras
C. Camaron
Serro mila
Baxo Nuevo
Baxo Comboi
Pracel
Serrana
Rock
Guanacos Bay
Coban
Belize
Tabasco
Istipa
Ciudad Real
CHIAPA
Tal
Chiapa
Vernal I.
Tangolchango
Aquatulco
Is. de Sacrificios
St. Pedro
GUATIMALA
VERA PAZ
Guatimala
St. Antonio
Gracias a Dios
Comayagua or Valladolid
St. Jago or St. George de Olancho
HONDURAS
Mosquitos Shore
C. Gracias a Dios
Gulf of Nicuesa
Bar of Istupa
Pto de Acazutla
St. Salvador Cuzcatlan
Amapalla
Amapalla Bay
Leon
Granada
Nicaragua
NICARAGUA
Lake Nicaragua
Bay of Realejo
G. del Papagayo
C. de St. Catalina
St. Dom. go
C. de Guyones
C. Blanco
G. de las Sabinas
COSTA RICA
Carthago
Barba
Bay of Honduras
Lake Trinidad
St. Juan R.
St. Carlos
Corn Is.
Maniglarez I.
Quita Sueno
St. Catharina or Providence I.
St. Andres
Albuquerque
SPANISH MAIN
Rio de la Hacha
C. de la Vela
Honda B.
Aruba
Bonair
Aves I.
Curazao I.
C. Roman
Rocca
Ferillao
Orchilla
Salt Tortuga
Rock
Pracel
C. de la Galara
Carthagena
el Rosario
St. Barnard I.
St. Martha Pueblo
la Ramada
Maracaybo
Gibraltar
Triste Bay
C. Blanco
St. Jago de Leon
CARACCAS
Comana
COMANA
PARIA
St. Thomas
Boca del Toro
Bay of Panama
Rey I.
Pta Mala
Pta de Meriata
Ladrones
Coyba
Gulfo Dulce
C. Boruca
Veragua
Panama
Mulattas
Is. de Palmas
Is. de Pinos
Mosquillo I.
Is. de Oro
DARIEN
CARTHAGENA
TERRA FIRMA
SOUTH AMERICA
SOUTH SEA
CARIBBEAN SEA
LITTLE ANTILLES
WINDWARD PASSAGE
HISPANIOLA OR St. DOMINGO
The Western part belongs to the French.
The Eastern to the Spaniards.

95 90 85 80 75 70 65 60 West from London.
30 25 20 15 10

ever, unnoticed by the Britiſh miniſtry: remonſtrances were made to the reſpective Courts, which produced ſome reſtraint on theſe practices; but though they were publicly diſavowed, they received all manner of private encouragement, and no effectual interruption was put to the ſale of the many veſſels belonging to Britain that were brought in by the Americans.

Had either France or Spain, or any power in Europe, acted in ſuch a manner at any other time, they would ſoon have felt the reſentment of this nation; but they knew its embaraſſments; they ſaw that its ſituation would compel it to bear with ſuch liberties as they were taking, and they continued them accordingly.

The behaviour of the French in their Weſt India iſlands, was ſtill more injurious and inſulting than in France itſelf. They not only admitted the Americans openly into their ports, and purchaſed their prizes as faſt as they could bring them in; they carried their audaciouſneſs ſo far, as to fit out privateers under American colours, and to take commiſſions from the Congreſs, in order to cover their depredations upon the Britiſh ſhipping in thoſe ſeas.

The captures made, on the other hand, on the Americans, by the ſhips and armed veſſels of the Britiſh navy, were very numerous; but they did not counterbalance the value of thoſe which the Americans made on Great Britain: as they were chiefly laden with proviſions, and articles for the trade of the Weſt Indies, they proved however highly uſeful to the Britiſh iſlands, where they always found a ready ſale.

But it was not only the permiſſion or connivance of the French and Spaniſh miniſtry at this encouragement of American privateers, that gave ſuch

of both kingdoms were full of ſuch indications as denoted that objects of far higher and more dangerous importance were in agitation. An altercation ſubſiſted between Spain and Portugal: but it was evident to all diſcerning people, that ſomething more was meant than a quarrel with that Crown by the vaſt armaments that were carried on by the Houſe of Bourbon. The compact that had been framed between the different branches of that potent family, was preſent to the mind of all thoſe who reflected on the opportunity that was now given to it, by the diſſention between Great Britain and her Colonies, to depreſs that power of which it ſtood ſo much in awe, and of which it had lately experienced the ſtrength in ſo many parts of the world.

In the midſt of the ſolicitude which the naval preparations of thoſe two great monarchies occaſioned in all thinking men, the attention of the public was called forth by one of thoſe ſtrange events that are ſometimes produced by ſeaſons of general turbulence and fermentation.

A man of an extraordinary turn of mind, arrived in the courſe of this year from America. He was a native of Britain:—Impelled by an unſettled, reſtleſs diſpoſition, his whole life had been a perpetual ſcene of rambling from one country to another, without fixing any where for a conſtancy. The viciouſneſs of his character engaged him in a variety of ſuch adventures as men given to profligacy ſeem to delight in. Leading a vagabond, irregular life, he had gone through many changes and viciſſitudes. He had enliſted ſeveral times as a ſoldier, and had as often deſerted, after receiving the bounty money. He had, as opportunities offered, been ſucceſſively a highway-man, a houſe-breaker, and a robber in every ſhape and form. He alſo worked occaſionally at his trade, which was that of

deeds, for which, if detected, he was conſcious that his puniſhment would be fatal, he thought it prudent to abandon his native country, and tranſport himſelf to America. Here he remained about three years, rambling from Colony to Colony, and ſupporting himſelf by his trade. As his adventures were known only to himſelf, he met with a friendly treatment among a people, who before the unhappy quarrel with Britain, made it a duty to receive the natives of this iſland with kindneſs and hoſpitality. This quarrel was at that time beginning to be ſerious, and took up the attention and converſation of all people. It was principally among thoſe of his own degree, that the conduct of the Britiſh government was condemned in the moſt outrageous manner. By frequenting and converſing with men of this deſcription, he gradually imbibed their opinions, and conceived an averſion to this country and nation, that increaſed to the higheſt degree of inveteracy and violence. In the warmth and impetuoſity of a fearleſs and enterpriſing temper, he was continually brooding on the means of wreaking his vengeance upon a people and kingdom he held in ſo much abhorrence. He projected at laſt the moſt daring plan that ever entered into the conception of a political enthuſiaſt,—that of contriving and effecting, alone and unaſſiſted, the complete ſubverſion of the power of Great Britain.

Fraught with a project that involved at once the total annihilation of the ſtrength of this realm, and the deliverance of America from all its attempts to ſubdue it, he again croſſed the ocean to this iſland, without communicating his intentions to any one.—It was by this deep reſerve, and averſeneſs to mix with aſſociates, that he had formerly preſerved himſelf from diſcovery in the perpetration of his wick-

ſame plan in the execution of the enterpriſe he was labouring to compaſs.

He neglected nothing which could in any manner prove ſubſervient to it. It was indeed of ſuch a nature, as required the utmoſt boldneſs, perſeverance, and induſtry of which human nature is capable. Theſe qualities he exerted in the ſupremeſt degree upon this occaſion, and carried them all to an extent that was truly aſtoniſhing.

His deſign was no leſs than to deſtroy the whole navy, together with the commercial greatneſs of Britain. In order to accompliſh this end, his intent was to ſet fire to the King's dock-yards, and afterwards to the principal ſea-ports and trading towns in the kingdom.

Full of this deſtructive ſcheme, he viſited and inſpected with the keeneſt attention and vigilance, thoſe docks and places at which his attempts were chiefly to be aimed. He ſtrictly examined their ſituation and circumſtances, and eſpecially the degree of care and watchfulneſs that was beſtowed upon them by thoſe who were appointed to their guard. This he acknowledged, upon his trial, to have found ſcandalouſly deficient, and inadequate to ſo great a truſt, and ſuch as afforded him the higheſt encouragement to proceed in his undertaking.

In the mean time, he was indefatigable in deviſing and preparing implements and materials for the execution of his purpoſes. His inventive genius contrived ſeveral of a very ſingular and extraordinary nature, and his whole time was taken up in making trials of their efficacy.

After failing in ſeveral attempts, he at laſt found means to ſet fire to the Rope-houſe at Portſmouth; hoping from the combuſtible articles with which it was filled, that the conflagration would be ſo violent as to extend to the adjoining magazines and

ſtore-houſes, and thus complete, at one ſtroke, the ruin of the firſt arſenal in the kingdom.

The fire was however happily extinguiſhed by the dexterity and diligence with which it was encountered; but not without having entirely conſumed all the hemp and cordage contained in the Rope-houſe; a great, but comparatively ſmall loſs, when the danger is conſidered, to which the immenſe value of the prodigious quantity of naval ſtores lodged in the contiguous buildings was expoſed, together with their very narrow eſcape.

But though the loſs upon this occaſion was not difficult to repair in ſuch a country as England, the dread and apprehenſion excited by ſo daring an attempt, were not eaſily removed. An alarm was ſpread over the nation, that plots and machinations were forming againſt it of the moſt inſidious and baſeſt nature; and that ſhould open and avowed hoſtilities fail, clandeſtine meaſures would be employed againſt it of ſuch a kind, as no care nor circumſpection would be able to defeat. As no diſcovery could be made of the author of the miſchief done at Portſmouth, it was accounted for, in the mean while, by various conjectures. It was attributed by numbers to incendiaries hired from abroad; ſome ſuſpected France or Spain; others charged it to America; nobody imagined that meer political enthuſiaſm, uninfluenced by the proſpect of reward, would ſpontaneouſly have ventured upon ſo deſperate an undertaking.

The perpetrator of this deed was now at Plymouth, watching an opportunity of repeating what he had done at Portſmouth. But the intelligence of what had happened at this place, had ſet people upon their guard; and in making an attempt on the dock, he was near being diſcovered.

Deſpairing of ſucceſs in either of theſe places,

the mercantile ſea-ports. Here he expected to find men leſs apprehenſive of ſuch a deſign, and therefore leſs watchful. To this intent he proceeded to Briſtol, where the party that ſided with the meaſures that were now proſecuting againſt the Colonies, had lately procured an addreſs of congratulation to the Throne upon the ſucceſſes of the late campaign in America.

This was a powerful motive to inflame the mind of ſo reſolute and vindictive a man. He arrived at Briſtol in January ſeventy-ſeven, and directly began with an attempt to ſet fire to the ſhipping, of which the crouded ſituation in the narrow gut that runs along the key, and is almoſt dry at low water, expoſes them to the moſt imminent danger in ſuch caſes. Failing in ſeveral endeavours upon thoſe veſſels, he next determined to make an eſſay upon the warehouſes lying near them, in hopes that the flames would ſpread on both ſides, and deſtroy both the city and ſhipping. No more, however, than ſix or ſeven were conſumed.

The terrors of the public were renewed upon this occaſion, and the rage of party was added to them. The enemies of the Americans aſcribed theſe miſchiefs to their favourers; and theſe retorted the accuſation, and repreſented them as proceeding from their own machinations, in order to have a pretence to blacken thoſe who oppoſed their iniquitous meaſures.

In this manner did individuals of narrow conceptions and violent tempers, labour to defame each other reciprocally; while the more cool and temperate of both parties ſuſpended their opinions, and were ſtruck with amazement and doubt, whence ſo unprecedented and unaccountable, and at the ſame time ſo perſevering a ſyſtem of iniquity could proceed.

It was happily at laſt brought to a concluſion by

ing Briſtol, in queſt of further adventures of the ſame ſort, was taken up, on ſuſpicion. He behaved, upon examination, with a coolneſs and aſſurance that almoſt diſconcerted thoſe who were authoriſed to inquire into his conduct. He avoided with ſurpriſing art, every captious queſtion; nor when he was brought before the Lords of the Admiralty, did his undauntedneſs fail him; he anſwered every queſtion with the ſame guardedneſs, and remained equally calm and unperplexed.

Means, however, were found to bring him to detection.—A man of the ſame profeſſion, who had alſo lived in America, or was an American, viſited him in priſon, and pretended much concern and ſorrow at his ſituation. He ſtrongly affected to be no leſs attached to the cauſe of America than the priſoner himſelf, and as ready to engage in any undertaking to ſerve that country. An intimacy being thus produced between them, the firſt was at length induced to diſcloſe himſelf. Evidence being obtained in this manner, he was brought to his trial at Portſmouth, where he maintained his character to the laſt, rejecting and invalidating the teſtimony of his falſe friend, from the baſeneſs and treachery of his behaviour. He received his condemnation to death with great compoſure, and met his fate with a fortitude worthy of a better cauſe than that for which he ſuffered. When at the point of execution, he acknowledged his guilt; and as an atonement for it, he left ſome directions how to prevent the dock-yards, and other public magazines, from being attempted after the like manner in future.

Such was the deſtiny of this wicked, but extraordinary man. His real name was James Atken; but he was much better known by that of John the Painter. He was perhaps the moſt ſingular phenomenon to which the tempeſtuouſneſs of the times

terprife, the motives that produced it, which though erroneous and unjuſtifiable, were not mean, the reſolution and induſtry with which it was conducted, the toils, difficulties, and hardſhips, with which an individual in low circumſtances, muſt have conſtantly ſtruggled in his labours to accompliſh it: all theſe conſiderations render it, though highly atrocious and criminal, no leſs an object of aſtoniſhment than execration.

The ideas of the danger with which Great Britain was menaced, both from within, as well as from without, received an additional weight from this event. Miniſtry had already begun to put the nation in a ſtronger ſtate of defence than had hitherto been thought neceſſary. Sixteen ſhips of the line had been added to thoſe already in commiſſion; and other preparations made, that manifeſted ſuſpicions of unfriendly deſigns from abroad.

In the mean time, the ſeſſion of Parliament was opened on the laſt day of October. In the ſpeech delivered from the Throne, it was repreſented, among other particulars, that the people of America had not only renounced their allegiance to the Crown, and their political connection with this country, but rejected, with circumſtances of indignity and inſult, the means of conciliation held out to them by the commiſſion ſent out for that purpoſe. That if their reſiſtance continued unſuppreſſed, much miſchief would enſue to the commerce of Great Britain, and to the political ſyſtem of Europe. That no people ever enjoyed more happineſs, and lived under a milder government than the Coloniſts in America. Their improvements in every art, their numbers, their wealth, their ſtrength by ſea and land, now unhappily exerted againſt the parent ſtate, were ample

1776.

The addreſs of the Houſe of Commons. in anſwer to the ſpeech, after coinciding with the declarations it contained, attributed the circumſtances of inſult and indignity, which accompanied the rejection of the conciliatory offers made by the commiſſioners to the Americans, to their reſentment of the firm and conſtant adherence of the Crown to the maintenance of the conſtitutional rights of Parliament, diveſted of every poſſible view of any ſeparate intereſt; and it expreſſed accordingly, the ſtrongeſt ſentiments of gratitude for this marked attachment to the Parliamentary authority of Great Britain.

This addreſs produced, however, great debates, and met with a determined oppoſition from the minority. An amendment was moved by Lord John Cavendiſh, which was the moſt remarkable of any that had yet been propoſed ſince the commencement of the troubles, for the freedom and pointedneſs with which it was expreſſed. It entered into a comprehenſive view of the conduct of the Britiſh miniſtry reſpecting America. It lamented that the minds of ſo large, and lately ſo loyal a part of the King's ſubjects, ſhould be entirely alienated from this country. Such an event, it was aſſerted, as the defection of a whole people, could not have happened without ſome conſiderable errors in the conduct obſerved towards them by government. It reprobated, in the moſt explicit terms, the late meaſures and proceedings of the miniſtry reſpecting the Colonies; it reproached them with the purſuit of ſchemes formed for the reduction and chaſtiſement of a party, ſuppoſed to conſiſt of ſome inconſiderable and factious men, but which had, in the iſſue, driven thirteen large Colonies into an open and armed reſiſtance. Every act of Parliament, propoſed as a means of procuring peace and ſubmiſſion,

ſition and hoſtility. The nation was now almoſt inextricably involved in a bloody and expenſive civil war, which threatened to exhauſt the ſtrength of the Britiſh dominions, and to lay them open to the moſt deplorable calamities. No hearing had been granted to the reiterated petitions of the Colonies, nor any ground laid for a reconciliation; the commiſſioners nominated for the purpoſe of reſtoring peace, not being furniſhed with ſufficient powers to bring about ſo deſirable an end.

After a variety of other obſervations, it concluded with a declaration peculiarly ſpirited and ſtriking.—"We ſhould look," ſaid it, "with the ut-
"moſt ſhame and horror, upon any events that
"would tend to break the ſpirit of any part of the
"Britiſh nation, and to bow them to an abject, un-
"conditional ſubmiſſion to any power whatſoever,
"to annihilate their liberties, and to ſubdue them
"to ſervile principles and paſſive habits, by the
"force of foreign mercenary arms, becauſe amidſt
"the exceſſes and abuſes which have happened, we
"muſt reſpect the ſpirit and principles operating
"in theſe commotions. Our wiſh is to regulate,
"not to deſtroy them; for though differing in ſome
"circumſtances, thoſe very principles evidently
"bear ſo exact an analogy with thoſe which ſup-
"port the moſt valuable part of our own conſtitu-
"tion, that it is impoſſible, with any appearance
"of juſtice, to think of wholly extirpating them
"by the ſword, in any part of the Britiſh domini-
"ons, without admitting conſequences, and eſtab-
"liſhing precedents the moſt dangerous to the li-
"berties of this kingdom."

The oppoſition in the Houſe of Lords was no leſs animated.—The ſpeech underwent a ſevere examination, and the debates were carried on with a warmth and freedom of expreſſion ſeldom prece-

"The Miniſtry aſſerted in that ſpeech," ſaid they, "that the people of America were oppreſſed by the arbitrary government of their leaders.—But who were thoſe rulers whom they ſo paſſively obeyed? They had not any nobles among them; they were notoriouſly averſe to titular pre-eminence; they had in their articles of confederation, guarded with particular care againſt the future creation of nobility; their great men were ſuch merely by the ſufferance of the people, and the leaſt deviation from the duty they owed to the public, would diveſt them in a moment of all popularity, and all power.—They were, it was true, an improved and poliſhed people; but they were too clear-ſighted and ſagacious, to admit of any diſtinctions that would ſubject them to the controul of chieftains. They lived throughout the continent on a footing of equality, that extinguiſhed every ſpark of ambition in thoſe who might be inclined to aſpire, from the impracticability of ſucceeding in any views of this kind.—Commerce had enriched them, and the country contained many men of ſubſtance and property, but none were ſo ſuperior in opulence to the reſt, as to become through ſuch means objects of any magnitude. The circumſtances of the wealthieſt among them were but moderate, when compared with the prodigious fortunes of ſome individuals in this country. The fact was, that from the general diffuſion of induſtry, they were nearly upon a level; and that ſuch among them who made the greateſt figure, did it more by the eſteem in which they were held, and the reſpect that was ſhown to them on account of their merit, than by the influence of their wealth, or the ſplendor of their manner of living.

The Continental Congreſs had choſen Mr. Hancock their Preſident; but would any one aſſert that his opu-

tleman of great worth and integrity in the commercial line; was known to be free from ambition, and to harbour no other deſigns, but ſuch as were perfectly conſiſtent with the welfare of the community. His zeal, indeed, for the honour and intereſt of his country, was notorious; and he had given ſignal proofs of it in ſeveral inſtances: it was this, and this only, abſtracted from all other conſiderations, that had placed him in the ſeat which he now occupied. He had no authority at Boſton, and poſſeſſed no influence over his countrymen, till the preſent diſputes had brought him into notice, from his oppoſition to the Britiſh miniſtry: had not this been the caſe, he would have remained unnoticed, and paſſed his life in the ſhade, like all other perſons in that country, who did not acquire the favour of the public by rendering it ſervices. Theſe alone, in America, entitled men to ſuper-eminence and conſpicuity.

The caſe of General Waſhington was a clear proof that merit was the only motive that influenced the Americans in the choice of their chiefs. He was appointed to the command of their armies ſolely on account of his military abilities; there was neither favour nor bribery uſed in his promotion: he was choſen a deputy to Congreſs by the people of the diſtrict where he lived, from the good will and reſpect which the worthineſs of his character had procured him. Being a man of courage and experience in war, the Congreſs nominated him, as the fitteſt perſon they knew for the ſtation he now filled with ſo much reputation. Previous to this unhappy diſpute, he was a private gentleman poſſeſſed of a handſome patrimony; but his mind was much more liberal than his fortune: his generous and hoſpitable behaviour had recommended him to public notice, much more than his affluence. Had this been

greatneſs nor fame among his countrymen; and would have remained in obſcurity like many others, that had no other claim to their predilection.

Thoſe who compoſed the Congreſs, were not the richeſt men in the land. Their capacity and their reſolution had dictated the propriety of electing them. They held their authority from the good opinion of the people; the republican ideas prevailing in America, allowed them no other right to rule. It was abſurd, therefore, to aſſert that the Americans were now become ſlaviſh and ſubmiſſive: ſuch a ſudden change could not be ſuppoſed in men, who were known to be ſtaunch levellers, and declared enemies of all perſonal prerogatives; who thought and acted with more freedom and independency of judgment, than any civilized people whatever; who were more jealous of their liberties than any other nation; and who, in defence of their rights, had taken up arms, and were now inſpired with a determination to ſacrifice all that was dear to them, rather than ſubmit to demands that were contrary to their inclinations.

Such a race of men were not to be made tools of by a few deſigning individuals. The truth was, the whole continent had unanimouſly diſapproved the conduct of the Britiſh adminiſtration; and when it was found, that it perſiſted in meaſures oppoſite to their requeſts, and that no expoſtulations would prevail, the Colonies had aſſociated to oppoſe theſe meaſures; and had, like all other people in the ſame circumſtances, been compelled to chuſe directors for the ſupreme management of their affairs. But could a direction of this nature imply tyranny? Their leaders were appointed by the people at large, choſen annually, and reſponſible to a public that continually watched all their proceedings, and would withdraw its confidence the moment it ſaw

put ſuch aſſertions into a ſpeech, that ought to contain nothing but the ſtricteſt and moſt unqueſtionable truth?

What were the terms of conciliation offered to the Americans? Forgiveneſs upon unconditional ſubmiſſion. Did miniſters ſeriouſly imagine the Americans would accept of ſuch terms? Could they doubt an inſtant, that they would be refuſed with indignation, and that ſuch a treatment would neceſſarily produce reſiſtance? This, in the neceſſary courſe of things, muſt be followed with a determination to ſhake off the yoke of a power, from which they had nothing further to expect but enmity.

It had been aſſerted, that no people enjoyed greater happineſs, and lived under a milder government than the Britiſh Colonies; their proſperity, and the ſtrength to which they had attained, were inſtanced as proofs. The aſſertion was true; but militated againſt thoſe who made it. Why did they force ſo rich and powerful a part of the Britiſh empire to ſever itſelf from the parent ſtate, at a time when unanimity and good underſtanding were ſo neceſſary, to enable this country to face the potent enemies, who were ſecretly watching for opportunities to deſpoil it of its power? The noble fabric of Britiſh grandeur, erected by the wiſdom of our forefathers, and ſo long preſerved by their prudence and valour, was on the point of irretrievably falling to pieces, by the incapacity, the raſhneſs, the obſtinacy of individuals, whom warnings of every kind could not admoniſh, nor even reiterated experience induce to deſiſt from meaſures that were evidently pregnant with deſtruction?

What could miniſters mean by aſſurances of friendly and pacific ſentiments from abroad? Poor

ters whence they now came. Old grudges were not ſo eaſily forgotten; and this nation had every thing to apprehend from thoſe to whom it had done ſo much miſchief in the laſt war. Reſentment and ambition went hand in hand upon this occaſion, and would not loſe ſo fair an opportunity of revenge, as that which was opened by this fatal quarrel between Great Britain and her Colonies. The preparations of thoſe powers who ſpoke ſo friendly a language, were no ſecret; their partiality to the Americans ſhewed their intentions to this country; their encouragement to the privateers that were capturing the Britiſh merchantmen, was a ſufficient earneſt of the deſigns that were uppermoſt in their councils, and was but a prelude to what we were to expect, as ſoon as circumſtances had brought their plans to maturity.

To aſk for unanimity, after plunging the nation into ſuch calamities, was the higheſt inſult to a ſenſible people. Unanimity was the reſult of good conduct and ſucceſs; but not of imprudence and malverſation: it implied confidence and eſteem; but who could give them to men who had forfeited both; who had cruſhed all reaſoning by dint of numbers, and derided ſagacity and foreſight itſelf, when pointing to the unhappy events it had predicted? The aſſertions of that minority which adminiſtration affected to contemn, had been fatally too prophetic. The Colonies had reſiſted; they had declared themſelves Independent; they were ſecretly, and would ſoon be openly aſſiſted by our enemies: all this had been foretold; and all this had happened: minority would now venture to make one more aſſertion, which was, that America was loſt for ever.

One method only remained to extricate this country from the difficulties wherein it was involved

our armies from America, and to repeal all the acts obnoxious to that people. This, perhaps, might induce them to a re-union; but ſhould they refuſe to return any more to a ſtate of ſubordination to Britain, ſtill it were wiſer to acknowledge their independency, and to unite with them upon a footing of parity, than to continue ſhedding their blood, together with our own, to no other purpoſe, than to ſatiate a baſe and unprofitable reſentment.

A war with the whole Houſe of Bourbon, and perhaps with other powers, would be the inevitable conſequence of continuing hoſtilities in America; but ſuch a war at preſent, would no longer reſemble thoſe we had formerly waged with the Princes of that family. Powerful as they were at that time, they would ſtill be much more formidable now that the ſtrength of America would be thrown into their ſcale. It was a ſorrowful, but a true reflection, that one half of the Britiſh nation, was become an inſtrument in the hands of our natural enemies, with which moſt effectually to diſtreſs the other.

Impelled by theſe cogent reaſons, it was the duty of every man who felt them, to oppoſe an addreſs approving of meaſures which muſt, if perſiſted in, terminate in calamities, that would give ſuch deadly wounds to Britain, as might prove incurable, and bring her to ſuch a ſtate of debility, as would, from one of the firſt powers in the world, reduce her to hold but a ſecondary rank among the European nations.

The addreſs was juſtified on the other ſide in all its parts, as founded upon equity, prudence, and ſpirit. Nothing was recommended by it, that tended to oppreſs the Americans: no more was to be required of them than a return to the ſame obedience, which every other Britiſh ſubject was bound to pay. Was it, in the mean time, conſiſtent with the wiſdom, in which this nation ſo juſtly prided it-

ſelf, to throw away the fruits of the infinite cares and expences it had beſtowed upon the Colonies; while any hope remained of reclaiming them from their defection? To give them up, would be to reſign the wealth, the ſtrength, and the importance of Great Britain: they were evidently at ſtake in the preſent conteſt: were the iſſue of it contrary to what was hoped by all well wiſhers to their country, its fall and degradation would be the neceſſary conſequence.

It was equally repugnant to that idea of courage, ſo much boaſted of in the Britiſh nation, to be terrified out of their rights by threats, or by reſiſtance. The firſt was unworthy of their notice; and the ſecond it became them to overcome by that valour, which had ſo long been the dread of their enemies. The queſtion was now, who ſhould be maſters of America; whether Britain, that had founded, nurtured, and protected its Colonies there, during the ſpace of near two centuries, ſhould ſtill retain them; or whether thoſe Colonies, now arrived at maturity, ſhould ſpurn at the hand that had raiſed them, and plunge the dagger into the boſom of their parent ſtate? Would any one that was not an enthuſiaſt in republican principles, and an advocate of political licentiouſneſs, deny this to be a fair ſtatement of the queſtion?

There was a morality in public, as well as in private tranſactions. Nations were bound to each other by ties of gratitude, no leſs than individuals; and when they ſwerved from their duty, were equally deſerving of cenſure. The frequent breach of this duty, did not diminiſh its heinouſneſs: it was indeed become ſo common, that unreflecting people thought it hardly merited notice, and claimed, as it were, a ſort of tacit allowance from the generality of its practice. But ſuch people ought to be told, that neither habit nor preſcription can give a

ſanction to iniquity. The more common the crime, the greater the ſcandal. Nations ought no more to be exempted from condemnation, when they deviate from rectitude, than the moſt obſcure individuals.

Upon this principle the inhabitants of the Colonies were guilty of great undutifulneſs and ingratitude, in denying the requeſt of their parent ſtate, to aſſiſt her in the difficulties ſhe had incurred on the joint account of both. To ſay that the monopoly of their trade was a ſufficient compenſation for what ſhe had done on their behalf, was a fallacious aſſertion: they were a part of the empire, and ought, in juſtice, to contribute to the utmoſt of their abilities to its common exigencies, as well as this country. But this they moſt certainly had not done. While preſſures of every kind fell upon the inhabitants of Britain, thoſe of the Colonies enjoyed an eaſe and proſperity, ſuch as no people on earth had ever been recorded to have experienced. Severe indigence was the lot of multitudes in this iſland: the poor's rate bore ample teſtimony of what numbers were in want; but the Americans knew no diſtreſſes of this kind; they were well houſed, well fed, and well clad; and whoever was induſtrious, was ſure to lead a comfortable life.

This was an unanſwerable proof, that the people of Britain exerted themſelves much more for the common good of the empire, than thoſe of her Colonies. It was therefore a reaſonable argument in favour of the demands, made by the Britiſh legiſlature upon the Colonies. Their refuſal was not founded upon equitable motives. The internal felicity and opulence of which they were poſſeſſed, manifeſted a much greater ability to bear additional taxes, than the comparative circumſtances of individuals in Britain.

But the ſeaſon for arguing was over; the Americans had bid us defiance, and were become our enemies; the ſword was therefore to decide: it was now to be ſeen, whether we could reduce them to obedience by ſuperior force. Were this to fail, it would be vain to try any other expedient. They were experimentally found to be ungovernable but through fear. Lenity and forbearance had been tried to no effect; and had only prompted them to riſe in their audaciouſneſs, and to aſſume the ſtile of dictators in their correſpondence with government. It had been carried on indeed under the title of humble remonſtrances and petitions; but theſe could not conceal the haughtineſs and obſtinacy of their diſpoſitions, nor the determination that was apparent through all their pretences of attachment, to render Britain ſubſervient to their own conveniency, and to conſult her intereſts no further, than they could be made conducive to their own, excluſively of all conſiderations of the far heavier weight of burthens and expences borne by Britain, for the defence and protection of the whole empire.

It was yet time to aſſert our national dignity and ſupremacy; we were in full ſtrength and vigour; the reſources of this country, though they had been tried to a great extent, were far from exhauſted. They could not be employed upon a more critical and neceſſary occaſion than the preſent.

Miniſtry had a right to demand unanimity, and to call upon oppoſition to deſiſt from thwarting the meaſures that were purſuing againſt America. Whatever truth had been contained in ſome of their predictions, they had erred egregiouſly in the principal point of the diſpute, by denying the intention of the Colonies to caſt off the ſovereignty of this country. It was incumbent upon all good ſubjects, after ſuch a proof of inſincerity, to place no further confidence in the proteſtations, of whatever kind

that might come from America. While they continued to reſiſt on the footing of ſubjects contending for their rights, people might be excuſed for pleading in their favour; but they had now forfeited all right to patronage in this country; and to eſpouſe their cauſe at preſent, could hardly be conſidered in any other light than that of diſaffection and diſloyalty.

It was baſe and inſidious to repreſent the circumſtances of the nation as deplorable and deſperate. Such ideas could only inculcate deſpondency, which ought not to be admitted at the worſt of times: men of true ſpirit would preſerve hope in the midſt of adverſity; and real friends to their country, would never encourage deſpair; but the teſt of patriotiſm in thoſe who patroniſed the Americans, ſeemed of late to conſiſt in repreſenting Britain as at the loweſt ebb.

The ſucceſſes of the laſt campaign in America, afforded a well-grounded proſpect of ſettling affairs to our ſatisfaction. A ſpirited proſecution of the buſineſs in hand, would ſpeedily conclude it. None but enemies to their country, would throw any obſtacles in the way of ſo deſirable an object, as that of humbling her foes, whether they dwelt in Europe or on the continent of America; whether they were foreign nations, long uſed to rivalſhip and enmity, or a people ſprung from the ſame origin as ourſelves, and emboldened by that flouriſhing ſituation in which we had placed them, to make the firſt eſſay of their ſtrength upon thoſe from whom it was derived.

Much was threatened from abroad, and great terrors held out, that occaſion would be taken from theſe unhappy broils, to do Great Britain irreparable damage, either by fomenting them, or by attacking us in the abſence of our fleets and armies. But the prudence of government had fully obviated theſe

objections. A ſufficient force was preparing to face all dangers at home; and the proſperity of our arms abroad had, it was well known, caſt a damp on all the partiſans of the Americans throughout Europe. However well they might wiſh them, the moſt inveterate of our foes would not venture to engage in ſo diſtant a quarrel, until they ſaw better ſigns of its terminating to the advantage of our opponents.

We were now in the career of victory; it would betray weakneſs and imbecility to be driven out of it by meer apprehenſions. The object in purſuit was of ſuch conſequence, that we could not deſert it either in honour or intereſt. It was the preſervation of thoſe poſſeſſions, on which ſo great a proportion of our commerce and our ſtrength was founded. We ſhould not therefore relinquiſh them until every effort had been made to retain them:—To act otherwiſe would juſtly ſubject us to the imputation of a heartleſs and puſillanimous people. If it were to be our misfortune to loſe theſe valuable dominions, ſtill we ought not to put it in the power of our enemies to ſay, that we loſt them for want of courage to defend them.

What countenance could we bring to a treaty of accommodation with the Americans, the very moment, as it were, after they had done us the greateſt injury they were able? Had a treaty been adviſable before, it was no longer practicable at preſent, unleſs we meant to condeſcend to the loweſt degree of humiliation. But the preſervation of our honour was of more importance than even that of America. Admitting that we had acted erroneouſly in our former proceedings with the Colonies, their preſent behaviour counterbalanced all the grievances of which they complained. At all events we had a clear right to make good our claims to the participation

had induced us, in common with ſo many other nations, to found colonies in this newly diſcovered part of the world.

The people at large were now greatly alienated from the Americans: however they might once have been inclined to favour them, they were full of reſentment at their late conduct. The declaration of Independency had entirely altered their opinion of the Coloniſts; and they were heartily diſpoſed to concur in any meaſures in order to compel them to ſubmiſſion.

With ſo many reaſonable motives, to perſiſt in the determination to reduce the Colonies to obedience, it was but juſt to approve of an addreſs that recommended it. The general ſenſe of the nation coincided with the opinion of the majority in Parliament upon this occaſion: and an unanimity of this nature had always been conſidered as a proof of rectitude in the conduct adopted by miniſtry.

The concluſion of theſe debates was, that the addreſs was carried in the Houſe of Lords by ninety-one votes to twenty-ſix; and in the Houſe of Commons by two hundred and thirty-two to eighty-three.

Various, in the mean time, were the ſentiments and diſpoſitions of people relating to the ſituation of public affairs. Though a majority aſſented to the propriety of compulſive meaſures in America, yet their approbation was not given with that warmth and fervour which uſually accompanies a declaration of hoſtilitities againſt the known and long avowed enemies of this country. The idea of that object for which they were to contend, was not ſufficiently powerful to awaken much reſentment. The vaſt diſtance of the ſcene of action, and the remoteneſs of immediate peril, rendered people leſs attentive to the tranſactions that were taking place, and leſs

alarmed at their conſequences than their real importance required a reflecting nation to have been.

Thoſe who chiefly intereſted themſelves in the buſineſs, were ſuch as hoped for large contributions from America, to alleviate the public burthens at home. Theſe were the moſt numerous. This being a clear and diſtinct idea, obtained of courſe the moſt extenſive influence. Others again were actuated by motives of zeal for the glory of the nation, which they thought would ſuffer a diminution by yielding in a conteſt with its Colonies. There were alſo great numbers who profeſt themſelves unable to decide which of the two contendants, Britain or America, were moſt juſtifiable in their reſpective pretenſions. Theſe obſerved a kind of neutrality, and ſeemed to be totally indifferent about the ſucceſs of either party.

Nor ſhould it be forgotten, that the ſpirit of diſſipation, and the eagerneſs in the purſuit of pleaſure which had for ſome years ſo ſtrongly characteriſed the nation, operated at this period in a marked and ſtriking manner. So violent was this propenſity, that nothing but amuſement was allowed of in company, among many of the politeſt claſſes; and that politics eſpecially were excluded from all genteel converſation.

Among perſons of this deſcription it was univerſally remarked, that a paſſive acquieſcence in the views and meaſures of adminiſtration, was the reigning maxim. But as it aroſe from no other motive than the fear of being interrupted in their favourite purſuits by party diſquiſitions, they ſeemed in general to be little affected by the good or ill fortune of either ſide.

That diviſion of the people which eſpouſed the cauſe of the Americans, was incomparably more animated than any other. They had from the be-

they continued to preſerve it. They dreaded the ſucceſs of miniſterial meaſures in America, from an apprehenſion of the danger that would reſult from it to the liberties of this country. In this perſuaſion, they were indefatigable in repreſenting every where the neceſſity of putting an end to the diſpute. They conſidered it as ruinous in every ſhape: ſhould the Britiſh arms prevail, though this might redound to the reputation of Britain, it would eventually, by a chain of cauſes not difficult to unfold, occaſion, in all likelihood, the loſs of freedom. Should America, on the contrary, be ſucceſsful, the dignity of Britain would be hurt, and its luſtre tarniſhed among the nations. The dilemma was equally perplexing either way, and the only expedient to avoid it, was a reconciliation with America, founded upon terms of reciprocal equality, before the operations of war had decided the ſuperiority in the field. Such were the ſentiments and wiſhes of a conſiderable part of the nation.

CHAP. XXV.

Parliamentary Tranſactions relating to America.

1776—1777.

SHORTLY after the meeting of Parliament, a motion was made in the Houſe of Commons by Lord John Cavendiſh, for a reviſal of all thoſe acts by which the Colonies thought themſelves aggrieved.

The reaſon he alledged for making this motion was, that ſuch a reviſal would come very effectually in aid of the proclamation iſſued by the commiſſioners in America, by which the people in the Colonies were given to underſtand, that the Crown would concur in ſuch a meaſure.

It was neceſſary, he obſerved, that Parliament ſhould as ſpeedily as poſſible confirm this declaration. Whatever propoſals were made to the Americans on the part of adminiſtration, they would not be credited without this additional ſanction. It would remove all miſtruſt, and eſtabliſh that confidence, without which no negociation could proceed. If it was therefore ſeriouſly meant to fulfill the purpoſes of the declaration, miniſtry ought chearfully to concur in this motion.

It was however oppoſed with great warmth.—The arguments alledged againſt it were, that to take up ſuch a diſcuſſion at the preſent, might embaraſs the commiſſioners, and impede a negociation that was perhaps commenced, and already in ſome forwardneſs. If they had begun, they ought to be left to conclude it. Being on the ſpot, they were beſt judges how to conduct a treaty with the Colo-

niſts, and what conceſſions might be granted or withheld.

In the ſequel of the debate occaſioned by this motion, it was aſſerted by miniſtry, that until the Congreſs had reſcinded the declaration of independency, no treaty could be entered into with America.

Such an aſſertion was violently cenſured by oppoſition. It was no leſs than a denunciation of war, and all its calamities, unleſs the Americans impliecitly admitted the principal point now in litigation, without any preliminary ſtipulation.

The moſt haughty and arbitrary Princes had condeſcended to treat with their revolted ſubjects, notwithſtanding they had renounced their allegiance. Philip the Second of Spain, treated with the people of the Seven United Provinces of the Netherlands, after they had abjured his authority, and declared themſelves independent: he was not above making propoſals to them, and promiſing to reſtore them to all their rights.

Inſtances of the ſame kind might be adduced from all hiſtories: our own afforded enough to ſhow the impropriety and raſhneſs of ſuch an aſſertion, which was utterly inconſiſtent with ſound policy, and tended to produce the moſt fatal conſequences.

Other reaſonings were alſo adduced in ſupport of the motion; but it was nevertheleſs rejected by a majority of one hundred and nine, to forty-ſeven.

This rejection exaſperated the minority to a violent degree. They now ſeemed to have formed a determination to drop entirely the conteſt with miniſtry upon all queſtions relating to America. They avowedly withdrew whenever any were propoſed, and from this period left the Houſe to the full and undiſturbed poſſeſſion of the majority.

In order to juſtify this ſeceſſion, it was alledged

was ineffectual and nugatory; the weight of numbers was irreſiſtible, and baffled all arguments. It was a degrading office always to contend with a certainty of being defeated. Diſcuſſion was vain where people's votes were pre-determined. There was a time when reaſoning was liſtened to, and had its due influence; but as experience had ſhown that time was no more, it was wiſer to acquieſce in ſilence, than to undergo the fatigue of a fruitleſs oppoſition. They had for years labourcd to convince their opponents of the dangers into which they were about to precipitate this country; but finding it impoſſible to ſtem the torrent of a deluded multitude, they would deſiſt for the preſent, and wait with patience until the phrenzy of the day had ſubſided, and people were brought to a cool conſideration of things, either through their own timely reflection, or the conviction enforced upon them by diſagreeable events.

The ſeaſon was not yet come for the nation to be undeceived. It was the intereſt of ſo many to continue the deception, that it would laſt till an accumulation of calamities had oppreſſed the public to ſuch a degree, as to be felt by all degrees. Until then, individuals ſeemed too generally diſpoſed to ſubmit to miniſterial influence, and to graſp at thoſe benefits which were held out to thoſe who could further the deſigns of men in power. The times were ſo degenerate, that no man could have an opinion of his own with ſafety to his intereſt or pretenſions in public affairs. The venality ſo much complained of in former days, was an object of no conſideration, when compared to its preſent increaſe. It was then temporary and occaſional, but it was now reduced into ſyſtem; it prevaded all ranks and profeſſions. Means were found to make them all ſubſervient to the purpoſes of miniſtry; ſuch amazing

defeats, diſappointments, and loſſes of every kind, had diſabled them from purſuing their ſchemes any longer, they were ſure of a ready ſupport from thoſe whom they employed in their execution.

For theſe reaſons, minority judged it neceſſary to refuſe their preſence to tranſactions which they diſapproved, and could not hinder. They would reſerve themſelves for a more probable opportunity of being able to do ſervice to their country. When they perceived that adverſity had, as uſual, opened the eyes of men, they would then come forth again, and endeavour, if poſſible, to remedy the evils which it was not now in their power to prevent.—Such was the apology made by the minority for their ſeceſſion.

The ſtrength of miniſtry was now become ſo deciſive, that whatever was propoſed, was immediately approved of, and carried without any oppoſition or debate. Never had thoſe at the helm met with more accord and acquieſcence in the moſt ſucceſsful æras.

The number of ſeamen was now increaſed to forty-five thouſand for the enſuing year; and the expence of the navy amounted to four millions two hundred and ten thouſand pounds, including the ordinary, the building and repairing of ſhips, and a million that was voted to diſcharge the debt of the navy.

The expences of the land ſervice were not leſs enormous: their amount was near three millions, excluſive of the extraordinaries of the preceding year, which exceeded twelve hundred thouſand pounds, beſides new contracts for additional troops from Germany, together with the half-pay liſt, and the penſioners of Chelſea.

A bill was alſo paſſed for granting commiſſions to fit out private ſhips againſt the Americans. This was followed by another to empower the Crown to

of high treaſon, committed either in America or at ſea. By the proviſions of this bill, they were liable to be detained in cuſtody without bail or trial, while the law continued in force: it was reſerved to the Privy Council only to admit them to either.

This bill, however, did not paſs without oppoſition and ſevere animadverſion. It was contended that no legitimate or obvious reaſon ſubſiſted for inveſting the Crown with ſo unuſual a power.—There was no rebellion, either exiſting or apprehended, in any part of Britain or of Ireland. Such an extraordinary meaſure could only be tolerated in caſes of great domeſtic danger, when the realm or conſtitution were immediately threatened; but neither of theſe could be pleaded in the preſent inſtance. The coercive meaſures already taken againſt the Americans, were amply ſufficient, without any further addition; and the ſafety of the kingdom was amply provided for by the vaſt force by ſea and land now in commiſſion, and the readineſs with which a now well regulated militia could be called forth.

The operations of this bill were of an alarming nature. It would augment the animoſity of the Americans, and excite them to retaliate, by adopting meaſures of the like nature. This would embitter the minds of both parties, already exaſperated in a high degree. It would increaſe the rage with which hoſtilities were exerciſed, and render men implacable on either ſide.

A variety of other arguments were alledged againſt the bill, the tendency of which was to ſhow the danger ariſing from it to the liberty of the ſubject.

The reply of miniſtry was, that all theſe allegations were the effect of groundleſs diſcontent, and of a determination to oppoſe every meaſure of government, however prudent and well-founded. The end

and impriſon perſons guilty of treaſonable actions in the Colonies, or on the ſeas, or who acted contrary to their allegiance. Thoſe who were innocent of ſuch practices had nothing to dread; but ſurely it was conſiſtent both with law and reaſon, to apprehend all perſons both at home and abroad, who were juſtly ſuſpected of holding a traiterous correſpondence with the Coloniſts, by ſupplying them with money, or other means of reſiſtance, or by conveying improper intelligence to them.

After a long and violent debate, the bill paſſed by a majority of one hundred and ninety-five, to forty-three: to ſo inconſiderable and ſlender a force was oppoſition now reduced upon this occaſion, which numbers imagined would have called up a much greater liſt of opponents.

A petition was preſented by the city of London againſt this bill, reprobating it in the moſt pointed terms, and declaring it unconſtitutional, and ſubverſive of the moſt valuable rights of the people, ſubjecting them to arbitrary proceedings, and putting them out of the protection of the law.

Great complaints were alſo made of the profuſion that accompanied the expence of the American war. The extraordinaries of the laſt year for the operations by land and ſea, amounted to no leſs than two millions one hundred and ſeventy thouſand pounds; a ſum exceeding the largeſt appropriated to thoſe ſervices in any year of the laſt war, notwithſtanding the prodigious fleets and armies that were maintained in ſo many parts of the world.

The accounts were repreſented as purpoſely intricate and obſcure, in order to fatigue the attention, and deter people from an examination. The benefits allowed to contractors were ſaid to be enormous, and paſt all ſufferance; their charges were admitted, without a due inſpection, and their accounts wanted that explicitneſs, which alone could

render them clear, and vouch for their authenticity. The rate of tonnage had been raiſed upon government without apparent neceſſity; that of rum was beyond the market price; and other articles had been over-rated in the ſame manner. Thoſe who had furniſhed the army with proviſions, experienced ſevere complaints, on account of their bad quality, and, conſequently, unwholeſomeneſs.

The miniſtry was at great pains to anſwer and invalidate all theſe charges. A minute and laborious detail of the various branches of public expenditure, was laid before the Houſe, and every explanation uſed, in order to juſtify the manner in which the public money had been expended. From the comparative prices at large, paid in other dealings and tranſactions, it was deduced, that the coſt of the various articles purchaſed for the ſervice of government, did not exceed the current demand for them elſewhere, and that they had been procured upon fair and reaſonable terms. The hire of ſhipping, for inſtance, had not been advanced in the degree that had been objected; the price paid for tranſports, though greater than that given in time of peace, was far from inequitable: inſurance had riſen, the wages of ſeamen were more than twice as large as uſual; none but the beſt built veſſels were taken up by government; they were well manned and equipped, and always fitted out for defence: this increaſe of wages, and addition of hands, obliged the owners of veſſels, to raiſe their demands on tonnage proportionably, otherwiſe they would be loſers.

Various objections were made to the accounts given of the employment of the immenſe ſums levied upon the public. But what oppoſition bore heavieſt upon, was the beſtowing of contracts upon the members of Parliament. The moſt harſh and ſevere animadverſions were made on this practice;

it was open and direct bribery; it gave miniſtry an opportunity of purchaſing votes in that Houſe to an alarming extent; as every time a new contract became neceſſary, the great profits reſulting from it, excited the avidity of new competitors, and laid them open to miniſterial influence in a manner equally undeniable and ſcandalous. This was one of the conſequences of the American war, and none of the leaſt pernicious, as it had created a new fund wherewith to corrupt the repreſentatives of the people.

But excluſive of this evil, it produced another no leſs detrimental in its effects to the pecuniary intereſt of the public, than detrimental to its morals. It not only ſubjected the member thus bribed to the miniſter's command, but it reciprocally laid the miniſter himſelf under the neceſſity of conniving at the malverſation of the perſon whoſe adherence to his meaſures he had purchaſed. What was this but a mutual toleration of iniquity on both ſides? the more offenſive, as it was carried on in the face of day, and in defiance, as it were, of that integrity, which ought, at leaſt, to ſubſiſt in appearance, if not in reality, among individuals who pretended to claim the reſpect and eſteem of their conſtituents, as well as their obedience.

To this it was replied, that no particular preference had been given to any member of that Houſe merely upon that account, in the making of contracts. Agreements of this nature had invariably been made with perſons whoſe line of life rendered them moſt proper to be truſted with the buſineſs aſſigned to them, and moſt likely to fulfil their obligations. As the wiſdom of the nation had judged fit to admit men of mercantile education and buſineſs into that houſe, there could be no impropriety in applying to them in ſuch caſes, as ſoon as to any others. Their probity was not the leſs from their

a feat in Parliament; and they were as much entitled to benefit by their profeſſion as other individuals.

Every contract had been conducted with as much caution and œconomy on the ſide of government, as was compatible with the diligence and exertions exacted from thoſe who were employed. The moſt advantageous terms had been inſiſted upon, and obtained, that could poſſibly be deviſed or expected. Every individual's circumſtances had been duly weighed, and his reſponſibility and character duly aſcertained, previous to his being truſted. If any deficiencies had happened, they were owing to unavoidable accidents, and to ſuch fortuitous cauſes as could neither be foreſeen nor obviated in the ordinary courſe of things.

It was equally unjuſt and abſurd, to charge the employing of members of Parliament in the quality of contractors, to the neceſſity of procuring abettors of the American war. Miniſtry was ſupported by a majority that needed no allurements of that ſort to preſerve its ſuperiority over oppoſition. The number of thoſe who approved of that meaſure, excluſive of thoſe gentlemen who were poſſeſſed of contracts, was ſufficient to conſtitute an incomparable majority. Had even thoſe gentlemen, inſtead of adhering to government, formed a part of the minority, they were ſo few, that little ſtrength would have accrued from their addition to it. But it was now become the maxim of oppoſition to attribute whatever was unfortunate or blameable, to the plans that did not coincide with their opinions.—But whatever epithets they might affix to the conduct of miniſtry, ſuch as were diſcreet and circumſpect in delivering their judgment, would ſuſpend it, till events more concluſive than thoſe to which minority were ſo often appealing, had decided

This debate on contracts, and contractors, ended for a while the Parliamentary diſcuſſions relating to America. It was not till towards the cloſe of the ſeſſion, that an effort was again attempted to bring about a reconciliation between Great Britain and her Colonies.

His advanced age, and infirm ſtate of health, had of late prevented the Earl of Chatham from taking an active part in the diſputes that were agitating both Houſes of Parliament. He viewed with an unfeigned concern, the dangers that threatened a kingdom, the councils of which he had once directed with ſo much ſucceſs and glory. He determined again to come forth from his retreat, and endeavour, weak and debilitated as he was, to influence by the powers of his eloquence, and the ſtill greater weight of his character, the contending parties to drop their animoſity, and liſten to terms of accommodation. The failure of his former attempts did not diſcourage him; though he knew, experimentally, the obſtructions that he ſhould have to contend with, yet the firmneſs of his diſpoſition was proof againſt them all.

He repaired to the Houſe of Lords on the thir-
1777. tieth of May, and in the ſtrongeſt and moſt pathetic terms, moved for an addreſs to the Throne, to repreſent the deep regret and ſorrow with which they beheld the diſtracted ſituation of the once flouriſhing and triumphant empire of Britain, but now menaced with impending ruin, from the continuation of the unnatural war with her Colonies; to adviſe that ſpeedy and effectual meaſures ſhould be taken for putting a ſtop to ſuch fatal hoſtilities, upon the only juſt and ſolid foundation, a removal of grievances, and to ſignify their readineſs and deſire to concur in that neceſſary work with all chearfulneſs and diſpatch, as the only means of

ſecuring to Great Britain the commercial advantages of thoſe valuable poſſeſſions. To heal and to redreſs, would be more conſiſtent with the dignity and majeſty of the Royal character, and more prevalent over the minds of a free people, than the rigour of chaſtiſement, and the horrors of war, which hitherto had only ſerved to ſharpen the reſentment, and conſolidate the union of the Coloniſts againſt the Britiſh nation, and if continued, muſt end in a total and final diſſolution of all ties between them.

He then entered into an explanation of the intent of his motion, which was to repeal all the obnoxious acts relating to America, paſſed ſince the laſt peace, and to confirm to them eſpecially the right of diſpoſing of their own money. This, he ſaid, was coming to the point ſpecifically; ſuch an explicit conceſſion was a herald of peace, and would open the way for treating. Though much would remain to be ſettled, yet a preliminary of this kind would be ſuch an earneſt of the ſincerity and good diſpoſition of Parliament, as would remove the principal impediments to an accommodation, and accelerate the concluſion of it without further repugnance or difficulty.

He inſiſted with great earneſtneſs, upon the neceſſity of adopting the meaſure he propoſed without delay. The preſent ſituation of Great Britain expoſed her to the moſt imminent danger from the Houſe of Bourbon: a few weeks might decide our fate as a nation; a treaty between France and the Americans would be that final deciſion; we ſhould not only loſe the immenſe advantages which we had derived from the vaſt and increaſing trade of our Colonies, but that commerce, and all thoſe advantages, would be thrown into the hands of our natural and hereditary enemies.

After ſtating ſeveral particulars to ſhow the im-

and the pernicious conſequences of ſuch a conqueſt, were it practicable; and deſcribing the difficulties and diſtreſſes which had been brought upon the public, by engaging in hoſtilities, he concluded by ſaying, that "America was contending with Great Britain under the maſked battery of France, which would open upon this country as ſoon as ſhe perceived that we were ſufficiently weakened for her purpoſe, and found herſelf duly prepared for war."

Lord Chatham's motion was ſeconded with much eloquence and energy by ſeveral of the other Lords in the oppoſition. It was no leſs vigorouſly reſiſted by thoſe on the ſide of adminiſtration. The principal argument they employed, was, that America from the commencement of the diſpute, had taken a ſettled reſolution to conclude it by a total renunciation of this country's authority. It was a deſign long premeditated. If the preſent cauſes of altercation had not ariſen, other pretexts would have been found to quarrel with Great Britain. There was no reaſon to doubt they had been excited to act in the manner they had done, by the enemies of this nation, with a view to embroil and keep us occupied at home, while they were left at leiſure to purſue their ſchemes without moleſtation on our part.

Such a determination in the Coloniſts being once admitted, as it was certainly apparent from every circumſtance attending the conteſt, it would be no leſs unavailing than unworthy of the character of a magnanimous people, to make conceſſions that would only produce further demands. But it was nugatory at preſent to be making any proffers; none would be accepted, until the arms of Britain had humbled their pride: that was the moſt effectual preliminary to a peace: until the Colonies were convinced that they ſhould not be able to make good their independency, they would maintain it. No-

Britain from the meaſures ſhe had embraced: to them alone ſhe muſt now truſt, for a recovery of the Colonies; and the only queſtion at this day was, whether the ſtrength of Britain was adequate to the end propoſed: the perſuaſion being for the affirmative, ſhe could not conſiſtently with her dignity, any more than with her intereſt, avoid making a trial. She was called out to the field, and could not refuſe coming forth, without ſuffering diſgrace, and loſing her reputation, which was the greateſt of all loſſes.

Whatever dangers might hereafter ariſe in the courſe of this quarrel, it ſtill behoved us to proceed with what we had begun. Dangers were the concomitants of all ſpirited proceedings: It was the knowledge of, and the determination to face them, wherein true ſpirit conſiſted. We were engaged, it was true, in a perilous conteſt; but it was now ſafer to go forwards than to recede: by the firſt, we ſtood a chance of ſucceeding; but by the ſecond we tamely gave up every thing; which was a behaviour that would deſervedly ſubject us to contempt, and expoſe us to greater inſults and dangers than thoſe we were ſhrinking from through ill-timed caution, or rather through a fruitleſs puſilanimity.

Various other arguments were urged on either ſide; when, after an animated and intereſting debate, the queſtion being put, Lord Chatham's motion was rejected upon a diviſion, by a majority of ninety-nine to twenty-eight. This concluded all debates relating to the affairs of America, during the preſent ſeſſions.

CHAP. XXVI.

Military operations in America.

1777.

ON the opening of the ſpring, the Britiſh troops in America began to entertain hopes of proſecuting their operations with more ſucceſs, as they certainly would with leſs hardſhips and ſuffering than they had endured during the winter, when the rigour of the climate combated againſt them, and was an effectual impediment to all attempts upon the enemy.

The perſecution, to which the well effected to the Britiſh government had been ſubjected throughout the Colonies, had compelled great numbers to fly for refuge to the army at New York. They conſiſted not only of Americans, but of thoſe natives of Britain and Ireland who had ſettled in that continent previous to the preſent troubles, and whoſe attachment to their country would not permit them to yield obedience to the Congreſs.

In order to render them as uſeful as poſſible, at a time when no reſource was to be neglected, ſuch of them as were inclined to bear arms, met with every ſuitable encouragement. They contributed to recruit thoſe regiments which wanted their complement; and a very conſiderable corps was formed of them; which gradually augmented to ſome thouſands: they were officered by thoſe gentlemen who had been obliged to abandon their homes and property, for their adherence to the cauſe of Britain.

They were placed upon the ſame footing as the troops on the Britiſh eſtabliſhment: they were paid

clad, and ſubſiſted, and received every other advantage to which the others were entitled. Several good purpoſes were anſwered by this meaſure: it relieved from diſtreſs ſuch as were entitled to expect aſſiſtance. Inſtead of an incumbrance, they became ſerviceable in the cauſe for which they had ſuffered; it opened a proſpect of deriving further aid to it from the additional numbers, whom the outrageouſneſs of party would expel from the different Colonies; and it pointed out a place where thoſe who were deſirous of obtaining revenge for the ill treatment they had received, would be duly encouraged, and amply furniſhed with the means of ſeeking it.

Theſe people being thus embodied, were put under the command of Governor Tryon, in quality of General of the King's Provincial troops, by whom they were ſo well diſciplined, and exerciſed with ſo much induſtry and diligence, that they became in a ſhort time of the higheſt utility. They replaced the regulars in all the poſts that required to be guarded, and acquitted themſelves completely in all the duties of a garriſon, though they were not yet ſufficiently experienced to be brought into the field. This was the firſt meaſure of importance, adopted previous to the ſubſequent campaign by General, now Sir William Howe; who had lately been decorated with the order of the Bath, for his ſervices during the laſt campaign.

The Americans had, during the winter, erected mills, and collected large magazines, in a mountainous part of the Province of New York, called Courtland Manor. Its proximity to the preſent ſeat of war, added to the natural ſtrength of its ſituation, rendered it very convenient for that purpoſe. As it lay on the eaſtern borders of the North River, it commanded an eaſy communication on

ſtores had been depoſited there, as a place of the greateſt ſafety, and which a very little defence could render inacceſſible.

Peek's Kill, a place on the North River, at about fifty miles diſtance from New York, was the principal poſt of communication between the American army and its magazines. A plan was formed to ſurprize this place; by which an entrance might be ſecured to the upper country, and their depoſits ſeized or deſtroyed. This was the only method of coming at them: an open attack was impracticable from the difficulty of the ground, and the facility with which the enemy could have removed them had they perceived ſuch a deſign.

Colonel Bird, a bold and active officer, was placed
March 23, at the head of this expedition. He
1777. embarked with about five hundred men under the protection of a frigate and ſome armed veſſels. On the diſcovery of his approach, the enemy not thinking the place they were in tenable againſt his force, and ſeeing from the quickneſs of his motions that nothing could be moved off, retreated to a ſtrong paſs, two miles diſtant, after ſetting fire to the buildings, where the ſtores and proviſions had been laid up in readineſs to be conveyed to their army.

The troops landed without oppoſition; but found, upon reconnoitring the enemy, that the paſs he had ſeized, commanded the entrance into the mountains ſo effectually, that it could not poſſibly be forced. They returned to their veſſels, after deſtroying all that was on ſhore, as well as a number of boats belonging to the Provincials, that had been juſt laden with proviſions, and were on the point of departure on their arrival.

As the quantity of ſtores deſtroyed at Peek's Kill was not ſo conſiderable as it was expected they

jected to penetrate into thoſe parts where they were depoſited. Intelligence was brought that large quantities were laid up at Danbury, and other towns and villages in the Province of Connecticut, bordering upon Courtland Manor.

Another expedition was hereupon propoſed for the purpoſe of deſtroying them, the command of which was given to Governor Tryon, whoſe activity and diligence had been chiefly inſtrumental in procuring the intelligence. He was aſſiſted on this occaſion by General Agnew, and Sir William Erſkine, two brave and expert officers, and a body of two thouſand men were appointed to this ſervice.

They embarked at New York, and croſſing the Sound between Long Iſland and Connecticut, they landed at Norwalk, a place in that Province twenty miles from Danbury, the object of their deſtination. As that part of the country had no ſuſpicion of any attack, it was wholly unprepared for defence, and the troops received no moleſtation in their march to Danbury, where they arrived on the twenty-ſixth of April. But they had not been there many hours, before they were apprized that numbers of the Provincials were gathering on every ſide, and that they would ſhortly be ſurrounded if they made any ſtay. This rendered it neceſſary to uſe the utmoſt diſpatch in the execution of their intent. They accordingly ſet fire to the ſtore-houſes and magazines. Unhappily they could not prevent the flames from communicating to the town of Danbury, which was entirely conſumed.

After performing this ſervice, they ſet out next morning for Ridgefield, in the midway between Danbury and the place where their ſhipping lay: but the enemy did not ſuffer them to retreat unmoleſted. Generals Wooſter, Arnold, and Silliman, happened to be in the neighbourhood. Upon intelligence of a party of Britiſh troops being landed, they exerted

themſelves with ſo much diligence, that a conſiderable body of the militia and Minute-men were collected in a few hours. At the head of theſe they determined to throw themſelves in the way of the Britiſh troops, and interrupt their march, till ſufficient reinforcements arrived to cut off their retreat,

In order to effect this deſign, General Wooſter followed them cloſe in their rear, haraſſing and obliging them frequently to face about to repel him. General Arnold, propoſed, on the other hand, to poſt himſelf at Ridgefield, through which the Britiſh party was obliged to paſs, intending here to make a vigorous ſtand, till further aſſiſtance could arrive. To this purpoſe he marched acroſs the country with all ſpeed, and reached the town of Ridgefield before the Britiſh troops could come up with him.

In the mean time the Provincials under General Wooſter preſſed them on every ſide, making the moſt of every advantageous poſition they could ſeize, and diſputing the ground upon every opportunity. In this manner they greatly retarded the march of the Britiſh troops, and obliged them to proceed with the utmoſt regularity and circumſpection. Notwithſtanding they were guarded on each of their flanks, as well as in their rear, with field pieces, that did no ſmall execution, yet the Provincials continued to gall them with their muſketry without ceſſation.

Arriving at Ridgefield, they found a new enemy to encounter. General Arnold had ſo well improved the ſhort ſpace of time ſince he had taken poſſeſſion of the ground, which was not a full hour, as to have thrown up ſome works, behind which his men were advantageouſly poſted, and made a heavy fire on the Britiſh troops as they were advancing; but they were attacked with ſuch

gave way on all ſides; not, however, till after making a reſolute defence. General Arnold behaved on this occaſion with remarkable intrepidity: his horſe was ſhot under him, and a grenadier was coming up to pierce him with his bayonet, as he lay on the ground; but he recovered himſelf with great agility, and ſhot the grenadier dead upon his approach.

The Britiſh troops having made themſelves maſters of Ridgefield, halted there in the night, and reſumed their march next morning. But the enemy was now ſtrongly reinforced; and had ſeized every ſpot of ground on the road, that could be diſputed with advantage. The whole day was ſpent by the Royaliſts in forcing their way through a number of difficulties. It was evening before they reached a riſing ground within gun-ſhot of their ſhipping. Here they formed in order of battle, and on the enemy's preparing to renew their attack, they charged them with their bayonets ſo ſuddenly, and with ſo much fury, that they were entirely broken, and obliged to retire at a diſtance in order to recover themſelves. This gave an opportunity to the troops of reimbarking without further hindrance.

It was time to provide for their ſafety by retreating: their ammunition was totally expended; it conſiſted of ſixty rounds a man on their ſetting out; from whence may be inferred the warmth and activity of the ſervice they were employed upon. The loſs on their ſide in killed and wounded did not exceed one hundred and ſeventy; but that of the Provincials was much greater. Their principal loſs was that of General Wooſter, a brave and experienced old officer. He had ſerved in the laſt and preceding wars, and had ſignalized himſelf on ſeveral occaſions. He behaved upon this with extraordinary valour. Though in his ſeventieth year,

every charge that was made upon the Britiſh rear, till he was mortally wounded. Several other perſons of note among the Provincials fell on this day. The number of gentlemen that ſerved as volunteers among them on this emergency, was very conſiderable; and they exerted themſelves with the more zeal and bravery, as many of the militia were new levies, who had ſeen little or no ſervice, and required their example to encourage them.

In return for this incurſion into Connecticut, the people of that Province projected an attempt upon a poſt on Long Iſland, where a quantity of proviſions had been collected for the uſe of the Royal army. This was Sagg Harbour, lying at the eaſtern extremity of Long Iſland. Its diſtance from New York, and the ſmallneſs of the force ſtationed there, induced the Provincials to form the deſign of ſurprizing it, and deſtroying the ſtores, by way of counterbalancing the damage that had been done them at Peck's Kill and Danbury.

The perſon pitched upon to conduct this enterprize, was Colonel Meigs, an active and daring officer. He was one of General Arnold's principal companions in his memorable expedition to Canada, and in his attack upon the city of Quebec, when General Montgomery was ſlain. He

May 23, 1777. embarked with a choſen party of reſolute men, about one hundred and fifty in number; and eluding the vigilance of the many armed veſſels that cruized in the Sound, he landed within four miles of Sagg Harbour. Its guard conſiſted only of a company of foot, and an armed ſchooner. He came upon them unawares, before break of day, and attacked them ſo vigorouſly, that though they made a ſtout reſiſtance, he overpowered, and took them priſoners; deſtroying at the ſame time, all that could be found on ſhore, together with the craft that lay in the harbour, notwithſtand-

ing a ſevere and continual fire from the ſchooner, that lay within leſs than two hundred yards diſtance.

What rendered this expedition the more remarkable, was the aſtoniſhing ſpeed with which it was performed. It was begun and ended in leſs than thirty hours, computing from the time the party embarked at, to that when they returned to Guilford in Connecticut; having, it is ſaid, in that ſhort ſpace, meaſured about ninety miles by land and water. The diligence and courage diſplayed by Colonel Meigs, gained him uncommon applauſe, and ſhewed that he had not, without reaſon, been ſelected by General Arnold, to accompany him in the moſt arduous of the attempts he had formed.

The ſpring was now far advanced; but the Britiſh army was prevented from taking the field through want of tents and other articles for encamping. The neceſſity, however, of watching the motions of the enemy, induced Lord Cornwallis to draw the troops that had wintered at Brunſwick, out of their cantonments: He formed a camp with the old tents, on the high grounds commanding the communication along the River Raritan to Amboy, where General Vaughan did the ſame with the diviſion under his command.

This deficiency of camp equipage proved of the moſt material conſequence to General Waſhington, by affording him leiſure to make due preparations for the enſuing campaign. He had, during the winter, carried on his operations with the beſt men that could be ſelected from the militia of the ſeveral Colonies; but the major part returned home on the commencement of ſpring, which happened to be the term at which their obligation to ſerve had expired. The dread of experiencing the ſame difficulties in which he had been involved at the latter end of the preceding campaign, by the diſſolu-

ments could arrive to ſupply their places. But he could only prevail on a moderate number to remain. Some were influenced not to abandon him by the repreſentations of their officers, how ungenerous it would be to deſert the common cauſe at ſo critical a time; but the major part were held by their attachment to his perſon; which was in general a motive of great efficacy among his countrymen, and proved in various inſtances a circumſtance of the higheſt utility to his party. On this occaſion it abſolutely prevented the troops he had from diſbanding.

By theſe means he was enabled to preſerve the appearance of an army; but his real ſtrength was ſo ſmall, that had it been poſſible to take the field, he could not have maintained his ground. Thus, from whatever cauſe it proceeded, the delay in ſending out tents and the other appurtenances of that nature, was one of the moſt unfortunate accidents that befel the Britiſh army in the preſent year; as it entirely diſabled it from commencing its operations, while General Waſhington was utterly unable to oppoſe them.

The new method adopted by Congreſs, in order to recruit their army, and keep it on a permanent footing, did not ſucceed ſo well as it had been expected. The length of time for which it was propoſed to enliſt, did not coincide with the views of a people, who thought that every man ought in his turn perſonally to ſtand forth in defence of his country. Such a ſyſtem they conſidered as both equitable and not burthenſome; and did not ſeem willing to encourage any other. The enliſtments went on ſlowly; few cared to engage for the whole duration of the war; and even three years appeared a long term to be abſent from their buſineſs and families. Hence, notwithſtanding the great encouragement given by the Congreſs, the numbers raiſed in each

In the mean time, the exigency was ſo preſſing, that every method was neceſſarily uſed to remedy theſe deficiencies. It was propoſed to make drafts from the militia to fill up the regiments; but thoſe who reflected on the temper and notions of the people at large, repreſented this as a dangerous expedient, and unfit to be tried unleſs in the greateſt extremity. It would be conſidered as a breach of the public faith with individuals, and might lead them to withdraw their confidence from their rulers, the conſequences of which would be fatal. In order to avoid theſe difficulties, permiſſion was given to raiſe recruits among thoſe multitudes of Iriſh emigrants, employed in the ſeveral Colonies in the capacity of indented ſervants. By this meaſure, their maſters indeed were deprived of their uſe during the time for which they had, as uſual, purchaſed their ſervitude; but neceſſity, together with an aſſurance that they ſhould be duly indemnified, were motives that could not be reſiſted on the preſent emergency.

It had been hoped that the Northern Colonies, as moſt abounding with white people, would have been able to ſpare a conſiderable ſupply to General Waſhington's army. They were ſounded accordingly; but they pleaded the danger with which they were menaced by the ſtrong force under General Carlton. An invaſion was certainly preparing from Canada: they did not think themſelves ſafe at Boſton itſelf; and there were other quarters from whence they might be attacked, and probably would, were they to diveſt themſelves of the ſtrength they had at preſent.

Such, however, amidſt theſe difficulties, were the exertions of the Congreſs, and of the ſeveral Provincial Aſſemblies, that while the Britiſh troops were detained at New York, from the cauſes that

ſatisfaction of receiving numerous reinforcements from all parts, and to find himſelf in a ſituation of carrying thoſe plans into execution, which he could not have done, had the Britiſh army been able to begin the campaign ſooner.

Encouraged by this ſeaſonable augmentation of ſtrength, he moved forwards from Morris-town, and took a ſtrong poſition in the neighbourhood of Brunſwick, in the highlands, about Middle Brook. Here he threw up works along the front of his camp, well provided with cannon, and other defences. But his principal advantage was the difficulty to approach him; the ground being ſuch, as expoſed an enemy to every kind of danger in attacking him. He had choſen his ſituation with great judgment; on the one ſide he covered the Jerſeys, and on the other he obſerved all the motions of the Britiſh forces at Brunſwick, of which he commanded a full proſpect from his camp, as well as of the country between that place and the ſhores of Staten Iſland.

The operations of the ſubſequent campaign took their direction principally from the manner with which General Waſhington had an opportunity of commencing it. Various and oppoſite opinions were now entertained of the plan of acting that ſhould be adopted in the preſent circumſtances.—Previous to General Waſhington's receiving ſuch large reinforcements, and taking poſſeſſion of the ground along Middle Brook, it was imagined that the Britiſh army would find no difficulty in penetrating through the Province of Jerſey to the banks of the Delaware, and that the Provincials would not have been able to make any effectual oppoſition.—The reduction of the Jerſeys, would have ſecured the communication between New York and the whole chain of poſts that would have occupied the

vania. Had the enemy ventured a battle, in order to ſtop the progreſs of the army, nothing could have been more deſirable, as an opportunity would then be given of ſtriking a deciſive blow: but as the enemy would probably retire as the Britiſh troops advanced, they would eaſily become maſters of the paſſage over the Delaware, and conſequently of Philadelphia, which was an open and defenceleſs city.

Such was the plan of proceeding formed during the winter among the majority of people at New York, and which probably would have taken place, had not obſtructions of various kinds retarded it.—But General Waſhington's late movements had totally altered the face of things. He had now poſſeſſed himſelf of a poſition where it was impoſſible to attack him without incurring every diſadvantage, and expoſing the army to a conſiderable and inevitable loſs, without obtaining, perhaps, any ſucceſs. Were the army to march forwards to the Delaware, with an intention to force a paſſage, the leaving ſuch an enemy as General Waſhington behind, would be attended with the utmoſt danger. He would hang on the rear, and cut off the communication with New York, while the Provincial forces were making head on the other ſide. Such a ſituation would lay the army open to numberleſs difficulties. Were it in ſuch a caſe to fail in its attempt to croſs the Delaware, which would prove a work of no ſmall difficulty, from the many impediments that had been prepared, it would then be compelled to retreat to New York; but that would be found a taſk of no facility; the enemy would unqueſtionably ſeize upon all the paſſes, and great bloodſhed muſt enſue, merely to force a paſſage back to their former ſtation.

Theſe conſiderations, made it appear more deſirable to drop the deſign of penetrating into Pennſyl-

vania acroſs the Jerſeys. As Philadelphia was the object aimed at, a paſſage by water ſeemed the leaſt attended with difficulties; and though, perhaps, of more length, fully compenſated that defect by its far greater ſafety. A plan of this kind would have the co-operation of the fleet, of which the aſſiſtance had been ſo effectual in the principal operations of the laſt campaign. By gaining poſſeſſion of Philadelphia, the Britiſh army would be ſtationed in the center of the Colonies, and have the immediate command of the rich and fertile Province of Pennſylvania, and be at hand to invade any part of the neighbouring Provinces of Virginia and Maryland, both by land and by water. Add to this, that an expedition of this nature might be undertaken with great facility, from the immenſe number of tranſports, well manned, and well found in every reſpect, with which they were happily furniſhed, and which put it in their power to avail themſelves of every advantage which naval ſuperiority could give.

Before this determination was adopted, it was reſolved, however, to try every method in order to induce General Waſhington to quit his poſition, and bring him, if it were practicable, to riſk an engagement.

In the beginning of June, the long expected, and much wanted ſupply of tents and camp equipage arrived from England, together with a freſh body of German auxiliaries, and a conſiderable number of Britiſh recruits. Sir William Howe, after waiting with the utmoſt impatience, was at length enabled to take the field. He repaired immediately to the Jerſeys, and pitched his camp oppoſite to that of General Waſhington.

The Provincial army, excluſive of the ſtrong poſt it occupied, had received ſuch an acceſſion of numbers, as made it very conſiderable. The re-

England, had afforded time for detachments to arrive from the furthermoſt Colonies to Waſhington's encampment. The Northern Provinces, beſides providing for the guard of the Lakes, had at laſt arrayed a large force, which was ſent under the Generals Gates, Arnold, and Parſons, with orders to ſtation it on the North River, in readineſs to paſs it, and march to the aſſiſtance of General Waſhington, in caſe of need.

Sir William Howe was now employed in continual endeavours to draw the American General from his encampment. He had a variety of obſtacles to encounter: on the one hand, the vigilance of the Jerſey militia was exerted in cutting off all refreſhments, and watching all his motions. They performed this duty with the more keenneſs, as they were prompted by the reſentment of their former ſufferings. On the other hand, General Waſhington, though cautious not to involve himſelf in any riſk, omitted no opportunity of exerciſing his men, and inuring them to action; by engaging them in ſkirmiſhes upon advantageous terms.

The Britiſh General made ſeveral movements, as if intending to march to the Delaware. Conſiderable detachments paſſed along the flanks of the American army, taking the road to Philadelphia. Several motions of this tendency were made; but as they produced no effect, Sir William Howe drew nearer to the enemy's camp, where he continued ſome days, reconnoitring every paſs and opening by which an acceſs to it might be found. But after much toil and ſearch, none could be diſcovered that was practicable; the approaches were ſo ſtrongly fortified, and every poſt ſo well guarded, that no hope remained of forcing them.

That no effort might be left untried to bring the American General out of his ſtrong hold, another

broke up his camp with great ſeeming precipitation, and retired haſtily from the ground he had juſt oc-
June 19, 1777. cupied:—He abandoned the poſt of Brunſwick, and withdrew his whole army towards Amboy. This ſudden movement, ſo little expected, and executed with ſuch promptitude, deceived the Provincials. They came down from their encampment in large detachments, and followed cloſely the rear of the Britiſh army, which ſtill continued to retreat before them. They charged it with the greateſt fury, and from the celerity with which it moved, were encouraged to make a vigorous purſuit. As ſoon as the Britiſh army had reached Amboy, a portable bridge, which had been conſtructed for the paſſage of the Delaware, was thrown over the channel between Amboy and Staten Iſland. The baggage and heavy appurtenances, together with ſome troops, croſſed over it to the other ſhore, and all ſeemed prepared for the remainder of the army to paſs.

General Waſhington was now perſuaded that
June 26, 1777. this retreat was no feint. He decamped, and came forwards to Quibble Town, in order to ſupport the troops he had detached after the Britiſh army. As ſoon as this motion was perceived, Sir William Howe led it back in ſeveral diviſions, by different roads, in order to ſurround the Provincials, and force them to an engagement, by cutting off their retreat. The more effectually to compaſs this deſign, Lord Cornwallis was diſpatched with a ſtrong body, to ſeize on the paſſes to that mountainous part of the country which the Provincials had juſt left. He was met by a large party, advantageouſly poſted at the entrance of a wood, and well furniſhed with artillery. It was commanded by a gentleman well known in America by the title of Lord Stirling, though not admitted as valid in Britain. The troops

tiſh and Heſſians: they behaved on this occaſion with an emulation which the Provincials were not able to reſiſt. They were quickly broken on all ſides, and fled to a place called Weſtfield, where they took ſhelter in a thick wood.

The American General now ſaw the neceſſity of making a ſpeedy retreat to his former ſituation, in order to ſecure it. He ſeized with all diligence thoſe paſſes to the mountains, which he ſoon perceived Lord Cornwallis had in view; and with all poſſible expedition he repoſſeſſed himſelf of the encampment from which he had been decoyed by the dexterity of the Britiſh General.

It now became evident, that no ſcheme whatever would move General Waſhington from the poſition he had reſumed. To march through the Jerſeys to the Delaware, appeared an attempt highly imprudent from the reaſons that have been ſpecified. Nothing therefore remained for the accompliſhment of what was propoſed, than to embrace the ſcheme of going to Philadelphia by ſea.

While the neceſſary preparations were making for this important expedition, the ſpirit of enterprize which had lately ſignalized ſeveral of the American officers, was productive of a remarkable adventure. The capture of General Lee by Colonel Harcourt, had occaſioned much concern among the Americans, on account of the refuſal to releaſe him upon the terms that were offered by General Waſhington. They had long watched for an opportunity of making priſoner ſome Britiſh officer of equal rank, in order to procure his exchange. One ſeemed at length to be offered. The Britiſh troops that had taken, and were quartered in Rhode Iſland, were at the preſent commanded by General Preſcot. A project was formed to ſurprize him, as General Lee had been, and to bring him off in the ſame manner.

ſolute man, with about forty others, went over from
July 10, Providence to Rhode Iſland, in the night;
1777. and notwithſtanding the ſhipping ſtationed on their way, and the number of troops diſtributed about the Iſland, they landed undiſcovered, ſeized the General in his quarters, and brought him off with his Aid de Camp, without meeting with any interruption.

This capture occaſioned uncommon ſatisfaction to the Americans, from the certain proſpect it afforded them of recovering General Lee, for whom they entertained much reſpect, and were not devoid of anxiety. They conſidered him as a perſon particularly obnoxious to the Britiſh miniſtry, and of whom, ſhould fortune favour the Britiſh arms in America, they would not ſcruple to make an example. In this light they were highly deſirous of an occaſion to procure his deliverance, and were of courſe exceedingly rejoiced at an event which in their opinion inſured it.

This unexpected ſeizure of his perſon in ſo diſagreeable a manner, was a ſevere mortification to General Preſcot. He had not long before ſet a price upon General Arnold, and promiſed a ſum of money to any one that apprehended him. The latter anſwered this affront by ſetting a lower price upon the former.

This action of Colonel Barton, did not paſs unnoticed by the Congreſs, any more than that of Colonel Meigs, at Sagg Harbour. They voted them, together with the officers and ſoldiers who had accompanied them in their reſpective enterprizes, their public thanks, for the valour, activity and addreſs with which they had conducted them; and ordered an elegant ſword to be preſented to each of the Colonels.

In order, at the ſame, to teſtify their reſpect and gratitude to the memory of thoſe who had loſt their

lives in the cauſe of America, and as an incitement to imitate their courage and patriotiſm, the Congreſs decreed that a monument ſhould be erected at Boſton in remembrance of General Warren, who was ſlain at Bunker's Hill; and another in Virginia, for General Mercer, who fell in the action near Princetown.

As the circumſtances of the former of theſe gentlemen were not affluent, it was alſo reſolved by that Aſſembly, that his ſon ſhould be conſidered as the child of the Public, and ſhould accordingly receive a liberal and gentlemanly education at the expence of the United States.

CHAP. XXVI.

Expedition up the Cheſapeak into Pennſylvania.

1777.

WHILE Sir William Howe was making the neceſſary preparations for the projected expedition, the attention of the enemy was taken up in conjectures concerning its deſtination. Every part of the continent that lay open to an attack, was equally alarmed on this occaſion. Philadelphia made no doubt of its being the object of this formidable armament. But the country lying on the North River, was almoſt equally apprehenſive. Interſecting the North and South Colonies, it was thought by ſome, that the intention was to form a junction with the forces that were on their march from Canada, in order to cut off the communication between the New England Provinces and General Waſhington's army. Charleſtown was not without its fears; and Boſton, from its importance, ſuſpected an attempt, which was the better founded, as it was principally there the numerous privateers were fitted out that were ſo detrimental to the commerce of Britain.

General Waſhington felt the criticalneſs of his ſituation, and the ſuperiority ariſing from the naval ſtrength, that enabled the Britiſh army to menace at once every part of the American continent. The neceſſity of waiting till he could receive poſitive intelligence of the operations it had in view, obliged him to keep his poſition.

The great preparations that were indiſpenſibly requiſite for ſo important an expedition, were not

ced: it was the twenty-third before the armament was able to take its departure from Sandy Hook.

Some days before the embarkation of the army, Sir William Howe directed ſome tranſports to ſail up the North River. They were accompanied by a large floating-battery, and other appearances of a deſign upon that quarter. This feint ſucceeded ſo well, as to induce General Waſhington to detach a ſtrong force towards that River.

The ſtrength employed upon the expedition under Sir William Howe, conſiſted of thirty-ſix Britiſh and Heſſian battalions, with a regiment of light horſe, and a body of Loyaliſts, raiſed at New York. The remainder of theſe, with another body of light horſe, and ſeventeen battalions, were left at New York, under the command of General Clinton.—Seven battalions were ſtationed at Rhode Iſland.

A whole week's navigation was conſumed in making the mouth of the Delaware. Here intelligence was received, that ſuch effectual meaſures had been taken to obſtruct the paſſage of the fleet up that river, that it would be equally dangerous and fruitleſs to attempt it. In conſequence of this information, it was determined to proceed further ſouth, and to ſail up the Cheſapeak Bay, as far as that part of Maryland which borders on Pennſylvania, and is at no great diſtance from Philadelphia. Here the ſituation of the country would not afford ſo many advantages to the Provincial army, and it would be compelled either to retire before the Britiſh troops, or to engage them on more equal terms than they could be brought to in the Jerſeys.

This voyage was rendered extremely long and tedious through contrary winds. It was the middle of Auguſt, before the fleet's entrance into Cheſapeak Bay. Great inconvenience was felt from the exceſſive heat of the weather in that ſultry climate;

ders, the health of the people was so effectually consulted, that at the time of landing, they were in a state of strength and vigour very uncommon among soldiers after so long a confinement at sea.

The navigation up the Bay was very difficult and intricate. The Admiral's great professional knowledge was of constant and high utility upon this occasion. Through a multitude of dangers, the fleet was safely conducted as far up the River Elk, as it was practicable. Here the army landed without opposition, on the 25th of August, after more than a month's passage from its leaving Sandy Hook.

Part of the army was left to guard the stores and artillery, while they were landing, and to bring them forward with all speed. The General advanced into the country at the head of the main body, taking with him very little baggage and incumbrances of any kind, and moving with all possible expedition to the head of the Elk.

General Washington, upon information of the fleets sailing up the Chesapeak, quitted the Jerseys, and hasted to the defence of Philadelphia, which was now visibly the object of the armaments destination. On hearing of the British army's landing at the Elk, he encamped on the Brandywine Creek, lying about midway from the Elk to Philadelphia.

The former depredations of the Hessians, and the consequent irregularities of the troops in general, having excited much consternation among the people on shore, at their landing, it was judged necessary, in order to tranquilize the minds of the inhabitants, to publish a declaration, promising the strictest discipline and regularity on the part of the soldiery, and full security and protection to all who behaved peaceably. Whoever had not assumed legislative or judicial authority, were included in this promise, notwithstanding they might have acted illegally in

inferior ſtations, provided they returned immediately to their homes, and demeaned themſelves inoffenſively in future. A general pardon was offered at the ſame time to all officers and ſoldiers in the American ſervice, who ſhould lay down their arms, and ſurrender themſelves.

Sundry impediments prevented the Royal army from quitting the head of the Elk, till the beginning of September. General Waſhington was now advanced to Redclay Creek, between the Brandywine and the Elk. The Provincials poſted themſelves in the woods contiguous to the march of the Britiſh army; from whence they interrupted its progreſs by continual attacks. In theſe circumſtances, the Britiſh General was neceſſitated to advance ſlowly, and with great circumſpection, through a country ſo well known to the enemy, to which he was a ſtranger, and where every ſtep he took would certainly be diſputed.

He was obliged, on this occaſion, to be very ſparing of his men, and to reſerve them for ſervices of importance and deciſion; but the enemy, whoſe buſineſs it was to diminiſh his numbers, aſſailed him by inceſſant ſkirmiſhes, wherein, though they were generally repulſed, yet their aim was obtained, which was to weaken him without expoſing themſelves to any more than the loſs of men; which they could eaſily replace with others, while ſuch a loſs to him remained for a while irreparable.

As the Britiſh army continued to advance, notwithſtanding their efforts to impede its progreſs, they retired on the other ſide of the Brandywine, where they poſted themſelves on the rſing grounds upon its banks, in order to diſpute its paſſage. Their army conſiſted of about fifteen thouſand men. The force at preſent in the field under Sir William Howe, did not exceed that number.

Early

Early in the morning of the eleventh of September, the Britiſh army formed in two columns, marched to the enemy: the right, under General Knyphauſen, proceeded to the moſt practicable paſſage, called Chadsford. Here the center and chief force of the enemy lay, expecting, and well prepared for an attack. A ſevere fire of cannon continued from ten o'clock till the cloſe of day. The Heſſian General, according to orders, making repeated feints to attempt the paſſage of the ford. Several detachments of the Provincial army croſſed the River, and engaged the Britiſh troops; but after a variety of ſkirmiſhes, they were at length totally routed, and compelled to repaſs the River.

While theſe two diviſions of the oppoſite armies were occupied in this manner, Lord Cornwallis, at the head of the column on the left, took a long circuit to the upper part of the Brandywine, where it is divided in two ſhallow ſtreams. Theſe he paſſed without oppoſition, and marched directly to attack the right wing of the Provincials.

On the diſcovery of this movement, General Sullivan was detached to oppoſe him with all the force that could be ſpared from the center. This body waited the approach of that under Lord Cornwallis, on a very advantageous eminence, guarded on its right, as well as on its left, by thick and extenſive woods. In this poſition they were attacked by Lord Cornwallis; and notwithſtanding the ſtrength of their ſituation, and a very reſolute defence, their left was driven from its poſts, and fled to the woods, whither it was warmly purſued.

On this diſaſter of the left, their right wing, which had not been broken, retired in good order to another advantageous ground, from whence, after ſome reſiſtance, they were alſo compelled to retire in ſuch confuſion, that they were not able to rally.

During this defeat and flight of both their wings, their center, which was yet entire and ſtrongly poſted, endeavoured, by a ſeaſonable reſiſtance, to favour the retreat of the reſt. On the coming up of Lord Cornwallis's main body, a very warm conflict enſued. Here the Provincials ſtood their ground with ſo much reſolution, that night came on before they abandoned their poſt, and prevented their being purſued.

Neither was it till towards evening, that General Knyphauſen was able to croſs the ford. Herein he was chiefly favoured by the vigorous attack that was making on their right. He ſtormed the intrenchment, and ſeized the cannon that defended the ford. While he was thus employed, the Britiſh troops that had broken General Sullivan's left wing, after penetrating through the woods, to which it had fled, now ſuddenly appeared in ſight of that part of the Provincial army, which was contending with General Knyphauſen. This unexpected appearance threw them into ſuch conſternation, that they gave way on all ſides, and withdrew with the utmoſt precipitation. Darkneſs ſaved them from purſuit, as it had done thoſe under General Sullivan; otherwiſe the greateſt part of the American army muſt probably have been taken or deſtroyed.

The behaviour of the Americans on this day, was in general firm and courageous. Some of the new levies were faulty in their diſcipline, and, from want of expertneſs, were ſoon confuſed and put in diſorder; but the remainder ſhewed that they had acquired no mean degree of military ſkill and fortitude. Thoſe who diſtinguiſhed themſelves moſt on this occaſion, were the Virginians. It was remarked, upon this, as well as other occurrences, that the ſatisfaction they felt at ſeeing their countryman, General Waſhington, at the head of the American

perſon, often contributed not a little to animate the Virginians in the continental army, to exert themſelves in a particular manner.

The loſs of the Americans in this action, was conſiderable. Beſides the priſoners, amounting to four hundred, it was computed that the number of killed and wounded was near one thouſand. The loſs of the Royal army did not exceed five hundred in wounded and ſlain; the latter were not one hundred.

Immediately after the battle, the Americans withdrew to Cheſter, and the next day to Philadelphia. They were followed by the Royal army with great order and circumſpection. Though defeated, they were not diſpirited, and conſidered their misfortune rather as the conſequence of ſuperior ſkill and diſcipline on the ſide of their enemies, than as proceeding from a defect of valour on theirs.

Leaving the ſick and wounded at Wilmington on the Delaware, the Britiſh General continued his march towards Philadelphia. General Waſhington, unwilling to be forced to a ſecond engagement, quitted that city, and poſted himſelf on the road towards Lancaſter, an inland town, at a conſiderable diſtance from Philadelphia. Sir William Howe, on being apprized of this movement, advanced upon him; and was making the diſpoſitions requiſite to compel him to another action; when a violent rain, that laſted a whole day and night, prevented him from completing them, and enabled the Provincial army to avoid the danger.

In order to harraſs and fatigue the Royal army, General Waſhington poſted ſeveral detachments in ſuch a manner, as to command all the roads and avenues to their encampment. His intent was to ſeize all opportunities of drawing detached parties from their main body into ambuſcades. This he

every where in his intereſt, and as the Provincial army abounded with people perfectly acquainted with all its local advantages.

A very conſiderable detachment ſent upon a deſign of this nature, lay concealed in the depth of a foreſt, that ſtood at a ſmall diſtance behind the Britiſh camp; it conſiſted of fifteen hundred men, commanded by General Wayne. Upon this intelli-
Sept. 20, gence, Sir William Howe diſpatched Gene-
1777. ral Grey in the middle of night, with a party to ſurprize it. The enterprize was conducted with ſingular addreſs and intrepidity. Ordering his men not to fire a ſingle ſhot, he advanced in profound ſilence to the out poſts of the enemy, which were ſurprized and ſecured without the leaſt noiſe. It was now between twelve and one. The main body of the enemy, unapprized of its danger, was retired to reſt. Directed by the light of their fires, the party under General Grey proceeded undiſcovered to their encampment, and, according to the injunctions they had received, ruſhed upon them with their bayonets. Three hundred were killed and wounded, and a great number taken, with moſt of their arms and baggage. Obſcurity ſaved thoſe that eſcaped, as it had done before at Brandywine Creek. Of the Britiſh party, four only were ſlain, and as many wounded.

In the mean time, Sir William Howe was employing every movement and ſtratagem to draw the Provincials to action; but they too well knew the conſequence of loſing another battle in the preſent poſture of their affairs. They did not ſeem inclined to riſk an action even to ſave Philadelphia itſelf, now become the metropolis of America. When General Waſhington ſaw that he muſt either abandon the defence of that city, or venture an engagement, he declined the latter without heſitation, as

would put an end to all the hopes of further refiſtance.

The Britiſh General diſcovering this to be his final intention, approached to the Schuylkill, the river that runs on the weſt, as the Delaware does on the eaſt of Philadelphia. Having made ſuch diſpoſitions as were neceſſary to ſecure the paſſage over it, he conveyed the Britiſh army ſafe to the other ſide, without any oppoſition from the enemy. Nothing appeared to obſtruct him; he marched to German town; and the next day, which was the twenty-ſeventh of September, he took peaceable poſſeſſion of the city of Philadelphia.

It had been expected by many, that ſhould that city have been found untenable, the Provincials would have committed it to the flames, ſooner than ſuffer it to fall into the hands of their enemies, and become a place of arms, from whence they would have it in their power, from its central ſituation, to annoy the other Colonies at command. But the hopes of recovering it on a happier day, prevailed over the fears of the ſervice it might prove, while it remained in the poſſeſſion of Britain.

Previous to their evacuation of Philadelphia, the Congreſs had ordered ſome of the principal Quakers, and other gentlemen of the firſt conſideration in that place, above twenty in number, to be taken into cuſtody, as ſtrongly attached to the Royal cauſe, and known enemies to the ruling powers. Theſe gentlemen had repeatedly refuſed to give any written or verbal acknowledgment of allegiance or ſubmiſſion to the American government, or promiſe of holding no correſpondence with its enemies. Notwithſtanding the evident danger their perſons were in, they had even the reſolution to refuſe confining themſelves to their reſpective dwellings. The ſpirit of theſe gentlemen was unconqnerable to the laſt. As they ſtill perſiſted, in defiance of

threats, and in ſpite of all ſolicitation and intreaty, immoveable in their principles and in their determination to reject the teſt that was propoſed to them, they were ſent off priſoners to Stanton, in Virginia, as ſoon as it was apprehended that the Britiſh troops would take poſſeſſion of Philadelphia.

The firſt care of the Britiſh General, on his becoming maſter of this city, was to erect batteries on the Delaware in order to cut off the communication between that part of the river above, and that below the city, and to ſecure it at the ſame time from an attack by water. This undertaking was oppoſed as ſoon as begun. An American frigate, of thirty-ſix guns, aſſiſted by another of ſmaller force, and ſome other armed veſſels, attacked the batteries immediately on perceiving the people at work upon them. The firing laſted ſome hours; but upon the tide of ebb, the largeſt frigate grounded, and could not be removed. Some pieces of cannon being immediately levelled at her, ſhe could not ſtand the fire; her colours were ſtruck, and ſhe ſurrendered. The other veſſels ſheered off.

But though Philadelphia was taken, the acceſs to it by ſea was yet impracticable; a variety of works had been conſtructed at a great expence, and with equal induſtry and labour, to render all attempts to come up the Delaware fruitleſs. Facing the point of land where the Schuylkill flows into that river, lies an iſland formed by an accumulation of mud and ſand, and thence called Mud Iſland. Here very ſtrong batteries were erected. On the Jerſey ſhore, lying oppoſite to this, at a place called Redbank, a fort was built, well furniſhed with heavy cannon. Along the channel between thoſe batteries, ponderous machines were ſunk, contrived after the manner of chevaux de frize, from which they received that denomination. They were

tions, and headed with points of iron, ſtrongly fixed, to pierce any ſhip that ſhould ſtrike on them. The above batteries croſſed, and fully commanded that part of the river where theſe machines were depoſited; and they were ſunk ſo deep, as not to be weighed without immenſe trouble and difficulty; but this was a work that could not be undertaken without ſilencing thoſe batteries, and being in poſſeſſion of both ſides of the river.

At Billing's Point, ſome miles lower on the Jerſey ſhore, ſeveral more of theſe chevaux de frize were ſunk in the channel of the river, and protected by redoubts that mounted very heavy artillery. On the river itſelf were gallies well provided with cannon, and two floating batteries, with a number of armed veſſels, and ſeveral fire ſhips. All theſe impediments were to be overcome before acceſs could be had to Philadelphia.

On the defeat of the Provincial army at Brandywine Creek, and the conſequent march of the Royal army to Philadelphia, Lord Howe prepared to ſail round to the Delaware, to ſupport thoſe operations in which the aſſiſtance of the fleet would indiſpenſably be neceſſary. After entering the Delaware, as it was not poſſible to proceed up to Philadelphia, the fleet came to an anchor off the town of Newcaſtle, on the Pennſylvania ſhore.

As the navigation of the river was extremely annoyed by the batteries at Billing's Point, Sir William Howe detached a body of troops, under Colonel Sterling, to diſlodge the enemy from that fort: on perceiving the Colonel's party croſſing the river from Cheſter, on the Pennſylvania ſide, the garriſon immediately ſpiked all their guns, ſet fire to the buildings in the fort, and abandoned it without waiting to be attacked, or endeavouring to prevent the Colonel's landing. After the detachment had deſtroyed the fort, and eſpecially thoſe batteries

that commanded the river, Captain Hammond of the Roebuck, a very brave and active officer, proceeded to execute the difficult buſineſs with which he had been intruſted by the Admiral. This was to cut away, and weigh up thoſe ponderous machines that lay at the bottom of the river. He was vigorouſly oppoſed by the floating batteries, and naval force of the enemy that was ſtationed on the river to guard them; but with great courage, perſeverance, and labour, he overcame their reſiſtance, and ſucceeded in opening a paſſage for the ſhipping through this part of the Delaware.

In the mean time the Britiſh army lay encamped in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia. Its principal quarters were at Germantown, an extended place, conſiſting of a ſtreet two miles long. The enemy was poſted at Skippach Creek, ſixteen miles diſtant. As they had lately been reinforced with ſome choſen troops, General Waſhington hearing that the Royal army had detached ſeveral parties on various neceſſary ſervices, and that another part of it lay at Philadelphia, determined to attempt the ſurprizing of that which was at German Town.

On the third of October, towards the evening, he left his camp at Skippach Creek, and marched in great ſilence, under the cover of night, hoping to reach the Britiſh camp undiſcovered. At three in the morning he was cloſe upon it, and immediately made the requiſite diſpoſitions for an attack; but fortunately the patroles diſcovered his approach, and the troops were called to arms. Thoſe whom he firſt attacked, being at the furthermoſt end of German Town, and remote from the main body, were, after a brave reſiſtance, overpowered by numbers, and obliged to fall back into the town, whither they cloſely followed.

the Britiſh troops to make the greateſt efforts to reſiſt him. Colonel Muſgrave, at the head of the fortieth regiment, had ſtood his ground till he was almoſt ſurrounded. Seeing no other way of reſiſting the impetuoſity and ſtrength of the enemy, he took poſſeſſion of a large and ſtrong ſtone-houſe, that lay full in their front, with ſix companies of that regiment. From thence he kept up an inceſſant fire, and effectually checked the ardour with which they had hitherto proceeded.

It was neceſſary to diſlodge the Colonel, in order to effect the purpoſe they propoſed, which was to ſeparate the two wings of the Royal army, that were divided from each other by this, and the other houſes of Germantown. They brought up a whole brigade, with artillery, and aſſailed it on every ſide with the utmoſt fury, but without being able to diſpoſſeſs him.

In the mean time, General Grey came up to his aſſiſtance, with a great part of the left wing, and was ſeconded by General Agnew, with another conſiderable body. A part of the right wing advanced upon the enemy on the other ſide. The engagement was maintained during ſome time with equal obſtinacy; but the enemy was at length broken, driven out of the town, and purſued with great ſlaughter.

After gaining this advantage, General Grey moved with all poſſible ſpeed to the ſupport of the remainder of the Britiſh right wing, which was engaged in a hot diſpute with the enemy's left. But this acceſſion of ſtrength compelled them inſtantly to give way, and completed the total rout of the Provincial army. It now quitted the field on all ſides; but though the purſuit was continued ſome miles, as the country was interſected with woods and enclоſures, they made their advantages of them,

The Americans attributed the loſs of the day to the hazineſs of the weather. It was ſo thick, that they could not diſcover the ſituation nor movements of the Britiſh army, nor yet thoſe of their own.—This prevented them from acting in concert; it even occaſioned them to fire upon each other through miſtake, in the heat of action; and was, in ſhort, according to their repreſentation, the real cauſe of the Britiſh army's having time to recover from their firſt ſurpriſe, and to put themſelves in a poſture of defence.

The Britiſh army loſt in this battle, in wounded and priſoners, about four hundred and thirty men; no more than ſeventy were killed: a ſmall loſs in number, but it conſiſted, among others, of ſome very brave and excellent officers; among theſe, General Agnew, and Colonel Bird were particularly regretted. Of the Americans three hundred were ſlain, ſix hundred wounded, and upwards of four hundred made priſoners, among whom were fifty-four officers.

After the action at Germantown, General Waſhington returned to his encampment at Skippach Creek, where he continued to watch the motions of the Britiſh army, which had removed from Germantown to Philadelphia, in order to execute thoſe operations which were neceſſary to enable it to winter in that city.

The reduction of Mud Iſland, and the other fortified places on the river, were the principal objects in view, together with the clearing it of thoſe impediments that obſtructed its navigation. A ſtrong battery was erected for this purpoſe on the weſtern point of land neareſt to Mud Iſland, and a large body of Heſſians were detached acroſs the river, to attack the fort of Red Bank, on the Jerſey ſhore.

This detachment was commanded by Colonel Donop, one of the beſt officers in the Heſſian army, and who had rendered ſome ſignal and important

ſervices in this war. He was to be ſupported in this enterpriſe by ſome ſhips of force, and the arrangements for it were formed with great judgment. He made an intrepid aſſault on the enemy's entrenchments, and carried their principal outwork; but their interior defences were ſo ſtrong, that they could not be forced. The Heſſians were obliged to retire, with the loſs of their Colonel, who was mortally wounded, with ſeveral other brave officers. In advancing to the attack, and in their retreat, they were ſeverely galled by the enemy's gallies and floating-batteries; to which, as they were obliged in their march to keep along the ſhore, they could not avoid being entirely expoſed. Thus the attack by land totally failed.

The attack made by the ſhips was equally judicious and ſpirited: having made their way through the channel, which Captain Hammond had exerted ſo much reſolution and induſtry in rendering practicable, they took their ſtation in ſuch a manner, as to aſſail the works and batteries towards the Delaware, while the troops aſſaulted the defences on ſhore. But the obſtructions contrived by the enemy, had interrupted and altered the courſe of the river, and wrought ſuch changes in its uſual depth, that the ſhips could not compaſs a favourable ſituation for the direction of their fire. To thoſe cauſes it was owing, that the Auguſta, a ſhip of the line, and the Merlin, in working up to come cloſe into action, were both grounded, and could not be got afloat.

The enemy perceiving the ſituation of theſe veſſels, directed the whole fire of their gallies, floating batteries, and works on ſhore, and ſent four fire-ſhips down the ſtream againſt them: but though the ſkill and courage of the ſeamen and officers rendered them ineffectual, the Auguſta took fire during the engagement, and was burnt, toge-

ther with the Merlin; and the other ſhips were obliged to withdraw, in order to eſcape the conflagration.

Notwithſtanding this unſucceſsful attempt, the determination ſtill continued to ſurmount theſe various obſtacles, both from the ſpirit of the commanders, and the abſolute neceſſity of overcoming them. New meaſures were taken, and freſh preparations were made for this purpoſe. The enemy, who ſaw with what difficulties the accompliſhment of this object would be attended, neglected nothing to increaſe them, and to throw additional obſtructions in its way.

The people belonging to the fleet were of particular ſervice upon this occaſion. Through a ſmall and difficult channel on the weſt ſide of the river, they conveyed a number of heavy pieces of artillery to a little iſland within gun-ſhot of Mud Iſland, and erected batteries that greatly annoyed it. On the fifteenth of November, it was attacked by the Iſis of fifty, and the Somerſet of ſixty guns, and by other veſſels mounting heavy cannon. Theſe ſeconded ſo effectually the batteries on the above-mentioned iſland, that after defending themſelves vigorouſly during the whole day, the garriſon of Mud Iſland, perceiving that preparations were making to give a general aſſault to their works on the next day, abandoned them in the night.

As the works at Red Bank were yet unreduced, Lord Cornwallis croſſed the Delaware, and advanced at the head of a conſiderable body to attack it; but the garriſon withdrew at his approach, and the place was demoliſhed.

The works and forts on all parts of the river being thus reduced, a number of the enemy's ſhipping, on ſeeing themſelves deprived of this protection, took the opportunity of the firſt dark night, to paſs the batteries erected at Philadelphia unobſerved,

and to move farther up the Delaware for their ſecurity. In order to prevent the remainder from eſcaping in the ſame manner the frigate that had been taken from them was manned, and ſent, with ſome other armed veſſels, to intercept them.—They were ſo effectually cut off from the retreat they had propoſed, that to prevent their veſſels from being captured, they ſet them on fire, and abandoned them. They were all burnt, to the number of ſeventeen, among which were two conſiderable floating batteries.

The news that Philadelphia was in the poſſeſſion of the Royal army, had, in the mean time, ſpread an univerſal alarm throughout the continent. The Northern Colonies, which were moſt remote from danger, and had lately met with ſome ſignal ſucceſſes, reſolved upon this occaſion, to uſe their utmoſt efforts to enable General Waſhington to ſtand his ground till the expiration of winter; when they doubted not of being able to collect ſuch a force as would render Philadelphia untenable by the Britiſh forces. They now ſent him a reinforcement of four thouſand of their beſt men. By their arrival, he found himſelf ſo ſtrengthened, that he advanced within fourteen miles of Philadelphia, and fixed himſelf in a ſtrong encampment near a tract of land called White Marſh.

This motion of the American General, gave hope to Sir William Howe that he was not diſinclined to make another attempt, ſimilar to that of Germantown, in which caſe a general engagement might enſue, which was an object of conſtant ſeeking to the Britiſh army, as well as to their commander.

In order to afford General Waſhington ſuch an opportunity, if he ſought one, and to be at hand to improve any that offered to attack him, Sir William Howe marched out of Philadelphia on the

fite to the Provincial troops. He varied his poſition ſeveral times, to draw them, if poſſible, from that which they had taken; but they remained immoveable, contenting themſelves with frequent ſkirmiſhes, in which they were conſtantly worſted.—Upon theſe occaſions, their defeated parties were always purſued cloſe up to their lines, with an intent to provoke them to come forth. But finding their determination was to act entirely on the defenſive, after reconnoitring every part of the ground they occupied, and diſcovering it to be every where inacceſſible, he reſolved to return to Philadelphia, in order to refreſh his troops. They had ſuffered great incommodities, during their ſhort excurſion, from the ſeverity of the weather; having from their eagerneſs and hopes of coming to immediate action with the Provincials, left Philadelphia without their tents, or any other preparation for encampment.

His march back to Philadelphia was performed in the afternoon of the eighth of December, leiſurely, and in preſence of the enemy, who, contrary to his wiſhes, gave him however no moleſtation. The diſappointment was very grievous to the Britiſh troops; as the winter was approaching, they were earneſtly deſirous to cloſe the campaign, if not with a deciſive, at leaſt with ſome conſpicuous action, that ſhould leave the enemy diſcouraged, and weaken his endeavours and exertions to haraſs and diſtreſs them, during the inclement ſeaſon they were about to experience.

The laſt operation of the Britiſh army was to procure forage for the winter. A large detachment was ſent out for that purpoſe, which was ſucceſsfully accompliſhed. After this, nothing remained but to provide for the ſafe and comfortable weathering out of the winter, by diſpoſing of the troops in ſuch a manner as to guard againſt the ſurpriſes

to which they were liable in ſuch an open place as Philadelphia: it was done accordingly with all proper diligence and care.

General Waſhington, on the other hand, removed his camp from White Marſh, to a place called Valley Forge, on the borders of the Schuylkill, about fifteen miles from Philadelphia. It was a poſition full of ſtrength and ſecurity, from whence he could obſerve every motion of the Britiſh army, and receive the ſpeedieſt information of all that was tranſacting at Philadelphia.

Propoſing to paſs the winter in this encampment, huts were erected, in order to enable the Provincial army the better to encounter the rigour of that ſeaſon. Nothing ſhowed the warmth and firmneſs of their attachment, both to their General, and to the cauſe for which they were contending, than their willingneſs to ſubmit to the various hardſhips, as well as inconveniencies of ſo uncomfortable a ſituation: it diſplayed a reſolution and perſeverance, which were convincing proofs to all reflecting people, that the war, however fatally it might terminate for them, would be of long duration, were Britain determined to proſecute it until America was entirely reduced. The reſources of a people who could bear trials and ſufferings with ſo much patience and readineſs, were, at all events conſiderable, and not eaſily exhauſted.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Military Operations on the Lakes, and in the Northern Parts of America.

1777.

WHILE theſe tranſactions were taking place in the middle Colonies, events of a much more important and deciſive nature happened in the Northern Provinces of America.

The Britiſh miniſtry had long projected an extenſive line of military operations in this quarter. It was an object from which the moſt ſanguine hopes had been conceived, and no doubt was entertained that to ſucceed here, would enſure ſucceſs in every other part of America.

The four Provinces of New England were conſidered as the ſoul and ſupport of the preſent confederacy of America againſt Britain. Could an impreſſion be made upon them, it ſeemed evident that every other Colony would be almoſt equally affected.

In this conviction, a reſolution had been taken to employ the ſummer of the preſent year in making a vigorous and ſpirited campaign upon the Lakes, and in the adjoining Provinces. The reduction of the firſt, would open an entrance into the laſt; they were the natural barriers of the Northern Colonies, and if they could be forced, the others, it was preſumed, would not be able to defend themſelves, after having failed in the defence of ſuch a ſtrong outwork.

It was reſolved, therefore, to leave nothing undone that could contribute to the ſucceſs of the expedition that was intended. A ſufficient number of regular and veteran troops was provided, excellent-

ly officered, furniſhed with a numerous artillery, and abundantly ſupplied with all manner of neceſſaries. Beſides the troops that came from Europe, it was expected that in Canada, from whence this expedition was to take its departure, a conſiderable aſſiſtance would be found from the great number of fighting men it was able to afford, who though not regularly diſciplined, were well acquainted with the uſe of arms, and would be of eſſential ſervice, from their knowledge of the country, and manner of warring.

To theſe forces was to be added a large proportion of the native Indians. Governor Carlton was accordingly directed to exert his influence among them for this purpoſe. Such was his addreſs and zeal in forwarding this, as he had done every other meaſure conducive to the buſineſs in agitation, that, what from the reſpect and attachment they profeſſed for him, and what from their natural propenſity to war and plunder, their warriors repaired to him in multitudes.

The Britiſh troops appointed to this expedition amounted to four thouſand, the Germans to three thouſand: the Province of Quebec, excluſive of its militia, ſupplied large parties of men for the works that were carrying on at ſeveral places, and for the tranſporting of ſtores, proviſions, and baggage acroſs the rivers, and through the many difficult paſſes in that country.

The command of this expedition was given to General Burgoyne, an officer of unqueſtionable ability, and whoſe active diſpoſition, and ardour for military fame, diſtinguiſhed him in a particular manner.

The officers employed under him were men of great bravery and experience:—The principal were, General Philips, of the artillery, who had acquired great reputation in Germany during the late war;

Generals

GENL. BURGOYNE.
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Generals Frazer, Powell, and Hamilton, all excellent officers: the German Generals Reideſel and Speecht, were both perſons of great profeſſional merit.

The ſoldiers compoſing the army under them, were well diſciplined men; they came freſh and vigorous from their winter quarters, where all poſſible care had been taken for the preſervation of their health, and to prepare them by continual exerciſe for the buſineſs they were going upon.

In aid to the principal expedition, another was projected on the Mohawk river, under Colonel St. Leger, who was to be aſſiſted by Sir John Johnſon, ſon to the famous Sir William Johnſon, who had ſo greatly diſtinguiſhed himſelf in America during the laſt war.

The firſt general encampment of the army was on the weſtern ſide of Lake Champlain. Here a de-
June 21, putation of the Indians in alliance with Bri-
1777. tain, was met by General Burgoyne, who treated them with a great war-feaſt, according to the ceremonial eſtabliſhed among thoſe nations.

He made a ſpeech to them on that occaſion full of that ſtrength and animation which peculiarly characteriſed his manner of ſpeaking. He exhorted them to behave with courage and fidelity to their friends, and to avoid all barbarity towards their enemies. He entreated them to be particularly careful in diſtinguiſhing between the adherents and the foes to the Britiſh nation. He earneſtly requeſted that they would put none to death but ſuch as actually oppoſed them with arms in their hands, and to ſpare old men, women, children, and priſoners; to ſcalp only ſuch as they had killed in action, and to treat compaſſionately the wounded and dying. He promiſed them a due reward for every priſoner they brought in, but aſſured them he

Injunctions of this kind were unuſual, and not very acceptable to the ferocious diſpoſitions of theſe uncivilized multitudes. They were not, however, without effect; and though they did not entirely prevent, they proved a great reſtraint to the perpetration of their cuſtomary barbarities.

After addreſſing the Indians in this manner, a declaration was publiſhed, in order to admoniſh and terrify the Americans, and to induce them to lay down their arms, and to return to the obedience of the Britiſh government, from the proſpect of the miſeries and horrors they would experience on the part of the Indians, now engaged on the ſide of Britain, and whoſe ravages and cruelty it would not be poſſible to controul. He diſplayed to them the ſtrength of that power which was to be employed againſt America by ſea and land, warning them to ceaſe a reſiſtance that expoſed them to ſo many calamities, and that would probably terminate in the ruin of their country. He promiſed to encourage and employ all thoſe who ſhould aſſiſt in bringing their countrymen back to their duty, and in re-eſtabliſhing the authority of the Britiſh government. Aſſurances of protection were given, upon the performance of certain conditions, to thoſe who demeaned themſelves peaceably, and did not forſake their habitations: threatening, at the ſame time, ſevere treatment to ſuch as committed hoſtilities, or abetted them againſt the armies or adherents of Britain.

After eſtabliſhing magazines, and ſettling an hoſpital at Crown Point, the campaign opened by the ſiege of Ticonderoga. The Americans had taken great pains to fortify this poſt, already very ſtrong by nature. On the eaſtern ſhore facing Ticonderoga, which lies on the weſt, they had erected a ſtrong fortification on the ſummit of a hill, which they named Fort Independence: the ſides and bot-

furniſhed with cannon. The communication between this poſt and the fort at Ticonderoga, was maintained by a bridge conſtructed over the gut where the fort ſtands, and through which the water from Lake George flows into Lake Champlain. It was upheld by twenty-two piers of vaſt dimenſions, ſunk into the water at equal diſtances: to theſe, floats were faſtened, fifty foot long, and twelve wide; and the whole was held together by chains and rivets of immenſe ſize: the ſide of the bridge towards Lake Champlain, was protected by a boom conſiſting of large pieces of timber, joined together with iron bolts and chains of prodigious thickneſs. Both the bridge and boom were juſtly conſidered as a work of equal induſtry and labour.

In a ſmall bay to the ſouthward of this bridge, there is a point of land, on which a mountain ſtands, called Sugar-hill. From this mountain the fort of Ticonderoga is overlooked, and effectually commanded. From this motive it was propoſed to fortify this hill, as a neceſſary ſecurity to the fort; but the extent of the works they had already erected, induced the Americans to drop the deſign, having hardly force ſufficient to man them properly. The ruggedneſs of the ground on its ſummit and ſides, and the difficulty of its acceſs, would, it was imagined, prevent it from being of any uſe to an enemy.

The garriſon of Ticonderoga conſiſted of about ſix thouſand men, commanded by General Sinclair. It was formed partly of continental regulars, and partly of militia.

The Britiſh army was in two diviſions, one upon each ſide of Lake Champlain. This was occupied by the ſhipping, which, from the deſtruction of the naval force of the Americans in the preceding year, was now in full poſſeſſion of that Lake.

On

On the ſecond of July, the Britiſh right wing that marched on the weſt of the Lake, appeared in ſight of the fort On its approach, the garriſon, contrary to expectation, ſet fire to all their out works and buildings, and abandoned them without making the leaſt reſiſtance.

The diligence of the Britiſh army was ſuch, that by the fifth of July, it had eſtabliſhed every poſt neceſſary to inveſt the fort completely, and to cut off its communication on every ſide.

The neglect and imprudence of the garriſon, in not ſecuring Sugar-hill, was now manifeſt. Notwithſtanding its ſteepneſs, a road was made up to its very ſummit, which was levelled for the conſtruction of a battery.

On ſight of theſe preparations, a council was held by the American commanders; in which it was repreſented, that their whole effective force was not ſufficient to man one half of the works; and that as it was not poſſible for it to remain upon continual duty, no effectual defence could be made; that as the place would be completely ſurrounded in twenty-four hours, it ought immediately to be abandoned, in order to ſave the troops. This repreſention being admitted by the council, the fort was evacuated that very night. The baggage, and what artillery and ſtores could be carried off, were ſent away by water to Skeneſborough, a place to the ſouth of Lake George; while the troops took the road to it by land.

As ſoon as morning diſcovered their flight, they July 6, were immediately purſued. General Bur- 1777. goyne followed them by water, after deſtroying the boom and bridge, which the Americans had conſtructed to prevent the paſſage of any ſhipping from Lake Champlain to Lake George. It had coſt them, beſides a prodigious expence, near a whole twelvemonths labour: but it was ſo quickly

demoliſhed by the ſeamen belonging to the Britiſh ſquadron, that the paſſage was completely cleared before nine in the morning for the largeſt frigates. The purſuit was continued with ſuch expedition, that before three in the afternoon, the van of the ſquadron came up with the gallies that guarded the boats with the baggage. Two of them were taken, and three blown up. Hereupon the enemy ſet fire to their boats, and then to the works and other conſtructions at Skeneſborough Falls, where they landed; after which they retired to the woods.

This was a total and deciſive defeat: they loſt all their baggage, ammunition, ſtores, and proviſions. The boats that contained them, were all conſumed, to the number of two hundred. The artillery taken from them, was no leſs than one hundred and thirty pieces.

The main body that had ſet out by land for Skeneſborough, was cloſely purſued by General
July 7, Frazer. He overtook it on the ſecond
1777. day of its march, at five in the morning. Expecting to be attacked, the enemy had taken a ſtrong poſt. The Provincials were commanded by Colonel Francis, one of the beſt officers in their ſervice. He had choſen his ground ſo judiciouſly, that notwithſtanding the great conduct and intrepidity with which he was attacked by General Frazer, he maintained his poſt with ſucceſs, till General Reideſel arrived at the head of a large body of Germans. Until the coming up of this reinforcement, the ſuperiority of number was ſo large on the ſide of the Americans, that they had almoſt overpowered General Frazer; but they now could ſtand their ground no longer. Their commander being ſlain, whoſe courage and ſteadineſs had enabled them to make ſo ſtrong and reſolute a defence, they were en-

Beſides Colonel Francis, many other officers were killed, and above two hundred ſoldiers: as many were made priſoners, with ſeventeen officers, including a Colonel. Their wounded were more than ſix hundred, many of whom flying to the woods, periſhed there for want of neceſſaries, and through inability to quit them in their helpleſs condition. The loſs of the Royal army on this occaſion was not conſiderable; only one officer of note was killed, Major Grant, a very brave and deſerving man in his profeſſion.

General Sinclair, with the van of the American army, was now at Caſtletown, about ſix miles diſtant from the place of the engagement. Upon intelligence of Colonel Francis being ſlain, and his party defeated, together with the diſaſter at Skeneſborough Falls, apprehending that he ſhould be intercepted, if he proceeded towards fort Anne, he thought it ſafeſt to repair to the woods, that lie in the intermediate ſpace between that fort and the contiguous parts of New England.

After taking poſſeſſion of Skeneſborough, General Burgoyne detached Colonel Hill, with the ninth regiment, towards fort Anne, in order to waylay ſuch of the enemy as were retreating to that place. On his march thither, he fell in with a body of the enemy, near ſix times as numerous as his own. They attacked him with great fury, and endeavoured to ſurround him: this obliged him to withdraw to a more advantageous ſituation, in order to prevent them from executing their deſign. He changed his ground accordingly, with ſo much judgment, and with ſuch exactneſs of diſcipline, and coolneſs of valour, that after an attack that laſted three hours, and was ſupported with great vigour, the enemy was obliged to retire with ſo much loſs, that deſpairing, after ſo ſevere a repulſe, to be able to

make

make any ſtand at fort Anne, they ſet it on fire, and withdrew to fort Edward on the river Hudſon.

In all theſe different engagements, though ſome of them were very warm, and the conflict ſpiritedly maintained by the enemy, yet the loſs in killed and wounded did not exceed two hundred men, on the ſide of the Royal army.

Theſe ſucceſſes had a prodigious effect on the minds of thoſe who obtained them. They made no doubt of carrying them to the utmoſt extent of their wiſhes and intents. On the other hand it highly alarmed the Americans, and rendered them extremely anxious what meaſures to take in order to ſtop the progreſs of the victorious army, which now threatened to overrun all the northern Colonies.

In the midſt of this good fortune, it was no ſmall mortification to General Burgoyne, that he could not improve it with that diligence which was requiſite to make it complete. He was now under the neceſſity of tarrying at Skeneſborough, till the arrival of the tents, field equipage, and proviſions.

That no time, however, might be loſt, indefatigable labour was exerted in clearing paſſages, and making roads through the country about fort Anne, in order to proceed againſt the enemy. The ſame diligence was uſed in removing the fallen trees and the ſtones ſunk in the water, with the many other obſtacles thrown by the enemy along the extent of Wood Creek, the ſtream that flows from fort Anne to Lake George. This was a tedious, but neceſſary work, as it was through this channel the ſtores, artillery, and all the heavy incumbrances were to be conveyed. The ſame fatigue was undergone in bringing the gun, and the proviſion boats over land, from the various lakes, creeks, and rivers, into others. The toil was aſtoniſhing; but the ſpirit that accompanied it was not leſs.

While General Burgoyne was accelerating the preparations requiſite to purſue his expedition, the American General, Schuyler, was at fort Edward, employed in collecting the militia from all the adjacent parts, in order to compoſe a force ſufficient to make a ſtand at this place. Hither the broken remains of the defeated army, repaired with their General, after taking a week's circuit through the woods, in order to avoid the Britiſh detachments that were exploring the country. They had ſuffered great diſtreſs from want of proviſions, and neceſſaries to ſhelter them from the continual rains that fell during their march.

The country between Skeneſborough and fort Edward, was ſo interſperſed with woods, creeks, and moraſſes, and the natural difficulties had been ſo induſtriouſly augmented by every impediment which the enemy could contrive, that it was with the utmoſt pains and fatigue, the Royal army was able to work a paſſage through it. Immenſe trees felled for that purpoſe, interſected all the roads and paths, and the watry grounds and marſhes were ſo thickly ſpread, that it was neceſſary to conſtruct no leſs than forty bridges to croſs them, One of theſe bridges extended near two miles.

General Burgoyne's march through this wilderneſs, met with very little impediment from the American troops. They attacked his people while at work to remove the obſtructions they had continually to encounter; but as they were no more than ſtraggling detachments, they could make no impreſſion, and were eaſily repulſed.

It was not, however, till the end of July, that he reached fort Edward. The diſtance from this place, to that where he begun ſo laborious a march, was ſmall; but the obſtacles were ſuch, that it was an object of aſtoniſhment, how he could arrive thither in ſo ſhort a time.

Another route might have been taken, lefs ſubject to ſo many difficulties. He might have returned to Ticonderoga, and proceeded by Lake George to the fort of that name, ſituated at its head. From thence the road to fort Edward, is broad and firm enough to admit of wheel carriages. But as the greatneſs of the difficulties did not appear at firſt, and the return to Ticonderoga might have been conſtrued as a retreat, the apprehenſion of cooling the ardour of his own people by ſuch a movement, on the one hand, and of reviving the ſpirits of the Americans on the other, made it ſeem more eligible to ſurmount the hardſhips that preſented themſelves in this arduous undertaking, than to ſuffer the enemy to ſay, that he had ſhrunk from it out of dread of the oppoſition he expected on their part.

To this it was added, that the reſiſtance which would probably have been made at fort George, might have occaſioned no leſs delay, than the meaſure which was adopted; but that when the garriſon of that place perceived its retreat muſt be wholly cut off by the Royal army's preſent line of march, it would not dare to remain in that poſt. They abandoned it accordingly, after burning the veſſels they had on the Lake, and retired to fort Edward; the garriſon of which followed their example, and withdrew to Saratoga, as ſoon as they were apprized of the Britiſh army's approach.

Thus, after ſtruggling with an immenſe variety of toil and obſtructions, General Burgoyne found himſelf at laſt on the banks of Hudſon's river, ſo long the object of his earneſt wiſhes. He was now in poſſeſſion of all the country between fort Edward and the city of Quebec. His communication was open and free from all interruption, with the poſts he had ſettled along that vaſt extent. A large quantity of ſtores and proviſions was already arrived at

employed in conveying them from that place, together with the artillery, the boats, and other heavy incumbrances that were neceſſary for their further progreſs.

Notwithſtanding the general conſternation that was now ſpread throughout New England, the people did not expreſs the leaſt inclination to offer terms of ſubmiſſion to the conqueror. In the midſt of the terrors and anxiety which the advancing of ſo formidable an army occaſioned, their attention was wholly occupied with the methods of making an effectual reſiſtance.

The Provincial aſſemblies behaved on this occaſion with a firmneſs and preſence of mind, which loſt ſight of none of the reſources that were left them; they were ſtill many. The extenſive tracts that lay between them and the Britiſh army, afforded innumerable ſituations to retard its motions, and the hardſhips with which it had already been obliged to contend, and at ſuch pains to ſurmount, were an ample earneſt of the difficulty it would ſtill find in penetrating further. The lapſe of time taken up in this manner, would allow them full leiſure to put themſelves in readineſs to meet the enemy upon advantageous terms, when he could no longer be avoided.

In purſuance of this, the militia was raiſed every where, and drafts made out of it to join the forces at Saratoga. The readineſs and number of thoſe who turned out as volunteers upon this occaſion, was remarkable, and was conſidered as an omen of the moſt auſpicious nature, as it ſhewed they by no means diſpaired of the cauſe; and that in caſe of neceſſity, ſupplies of men would not be wanting. By theſe means their troops at Saratoga began to recover from the apprehenſions with which the ſucceſſes of the Britiſh army had ſtruck them, and to exert themſelves in thwarting its operations.

In order to give them further encouragement, they placed an officer at their head, in whom the American troops, from his tried courage and capacity, juſtly placed the higheſt confidence. This was General Arnold. He repaired to Saratoga with a good train of artillery, and took the command greatly to their ſatisfaction.

Intelligence was brought to him upon his arrival, that Colonel St. Leger, who had been detached upon a ſeparate expedition to the Mohawk river, had made an alarming progreſs there, and if not checked, would become a dangerous neighbour, as he would be ſoon at hand to co-operate with, as well as to receive aſſiſtance from General Burgoyne.

To obviate this danger, General Arnold removed from Saratoga to Still-water, a place lying midway between Saratoga and the junction of the Mohawk river with that of Hudſon.

In the mean time, the apprehenſions of thoſe who had been averſe to the employing of the Indians in the Britiſh army, began to be juſtified. Notwithſtanding the care and precautions taken by General Burgoyne to prevent the effects of their barbarous diſpoſition, they were ſometimes carried to an exceſs, that ſhocked his humanity the more, as it was totally out of his power to controul them in the degree that he had hoped and propoſed. The outrages they committed, were ſuch as proved highly detrimental to the Royal cauſe. They ſpared neither friend nor foe, and exerciſed their uſual cruelties with very little attention to the threats that were held out in order to reſtrain and deter them.

Several inſtances of this nature happened about that time, which contributed powerfully to alienate the minds of many from the cauſe in which they ſerved. One was recorded in particular, that equally ſtruck both parties with horror. A young

aliſt, being on her way to the Britiſh army, where ſhe was to have been married to an officer, unhappily fell into the hands of the Indians, who, without regarding her youth and beauty, murdered her with many circumſtances of barbarity.

Scenes of this nature ſerved to render the Royal party extremely odious. However the Americans might be conſcious that they were as offenſive, and as much abhorred by their enemies, as by themſelves, ſtill they could not forgive them the accepting of ſuch auxiliaries, as muſt neceſſarily diſgrace the beſt cauſe.

The reſentment occaſioned by the conduct of the Indians, and no leſs the dread of being expoſed to their fury, helped conſiderably to bring recruits from every quarter to the American army. It was conſidered as the only place of refuge and ſecurity at preſent. The inhabitants of the tracts contiguous to the Britiſh army, took up arms almoſt univerſally. The preſervation of their families was now become an object of immediate concern. As the country was populous, they flocked in multitudes to General Arnold's camp; and he ſoon found himſelf at the head of an army, which, though compoſed of militia, and undiſciplined men, was animated with that ſpirit of indignation and revenge, which ſo often ſupplies all military deficiencies.

The Provincial Aſſemblies were not deceived in their expectation of thoſe obſtacles which would continue to oppoſe the Britiſh arms. The troops encamped along the Hudſon, under General Burgoyne, were now undergoing hardſhips and fatigues without any proſpect of alleviation. From the end of July, to the middle of Auguſt, their whole time was taken up in forwarding the boats, proviſions, and many other neceſſaries, both for ſubſiſtence and warlike operations, from fort George to their camp on Hudſon's river. The diſtance was not

great, being no more than twenty miles; but the labour was exceſſive, and very diſcouraging from the little effect it produced: the roads in many places lay through vaſt ſteeps, and in others had been damaged or deſtroyed. A very ſmall proportion of the horſes was come, that were to have been furniſhed in Canada; they were unavoidably retarded by the length and perpetual difficulties of a journey, that was to be taken through ſuch an unceaſing and perplexing viciſſitude of mountains, foreſts, lakes, ſwamps, and rivers, ſcattered along a country, in many parts uncultivated and wild. No more than about one hundred oxen had been procured, of which it was neceſſary to employ ten and ſometimes twelve, to draw a ſingle batteau, ſo heavy and deep the roads were become, through the exceſſive wetneſs of the ſeaſon. In fifteen days of the hardeſt labour, no more than ten boats were got afloat in Hudſon's river, and there was only four days proviſion before-hand in the camp. Thus it began to be apprehended, that it would prove utterly impracticable to form a magazine ſufficient to ſupply the army with proviſions during the future operations of the campaign, as they found it ſo difficult to provide for its daily ſubſiſtence.

This want of reſources was an equal motive of diſcouragement to the Britiſh army, and of encouragement to the Americans. It was not doubted among them, that this alone would be an unſurmountable impediment, and totally obviate the exertions that would otherwiſe have reſulted from the Britiſh General's well-known abilities and valour.

While he was pondering in what manner to remedy theſe alarming preſſures, he was informed that Colonel St. Leger had penetrated as far as Fort Stanwix, and was cloſely beſieging it. This ſuggeſted an idea of moving forward inſtantly. Were the enemy to retire to the Mohawk river, he would

mand, and the forces under Colonel St. Leger, and liable to an attack from either ſide. By ſuch a retreat the road would alſo lie open to Albany, between which and the American army, his own would then have an opportunity of poſting itſelf.—In this ſituation the American General would be compelled either to fight him, or to croſs the Hudſon, in order to ſecure his retreat into New England. But ſhould he, on the Britiſh army's advancing in the manner propoſed, withdraw directly towards Albany, the country on the Mohawk would lie open, and he might form a junction with Colonel St. Leger, to the manifeſt advantage of whatever attempts they might think proper to make conjointly.

Such was the plan conceived by General Burgoyne in the preſent juncture. But the obſtructions to the executing of it, or almoſt any other, ſtill continued. The communication with Fort George was neceſſary to be preſerved at all events, and at whatever diſtance he advanced. But the number of troops that would be requiſite to form ſo long a chain of communication, and to guard the convoys of proviſions, and other neceſſaries, on their way to the main body, would ſo weaken his army, as to render its ſtrength totally inadequate to any great exertions; and unleſs the numbers thus employed were conſiderable, they would be ineffectual, as a ſtrong body of the enemy lay within a few hour's march, ready upon the firſt opportunity, to intercept any party that was not of ſome force.

This want of neceſſaries was the more mortifying, as the Provincial camp was furniſhed with them in the greateſt abundance. Its ſupplies came from the frontiers of New England, to a place called Bennington, little more than twenty miles diſtant from the banks of the Hudſon. Here a copi-

they were wanted. It was well guarded by a numerous body of militia.

This magazine lying at no great diſtance, General Burgoyne formed the deſign of ſeizing it by ſurprize. The poſſeſſion of ſo conſiderable a ſupply, would enable him to proceed without any delay towards the enemy, and to proſecute the main object of his expedition.

He ſelected for this buſineſs Colonel Baum, a German officer of great bravery, who ſet out at the head of five hundred men, two hundred of whom were Germans, of his own chuſing. To be ready at hand for the ſupport of this party, the army marched up the eaſtern ſhore of the Hudſon river, and encamped almoſt abreaſt of Saratoga, with the river between it and that place. An advanced party was poſted at Batten Kill, lying between the camp and Bennington, in order to ſupport that of Colonel Baum.

At the time he ſet forward, a detachment of the enemy was conducting a large ſupply of cattle and proviſion to their camp; theſe he ſeized, and ſent to the Britiſh quarters. He could not, however, proceed with that expedition which was neceſſary to ſurprize the enemy, from the badneſs of the roads, and other deficiencies. They diſcovered his deſign, and they prepared to receive him.

Being informed that their force was greatly ſuperior to his, he halted, and having taken an advantageous poſition, he ſent notice of his ſituation to the General, who diſpatched Colonel Breyman to his aſſiſtance. This officer haſted with all ſpeed to the ſupport of his countryman; but the ſame cauſe that had prevented Colonel Baum from ſurpriſing the Provincials, now prevented Colonel Breyman from arriving in time to aſſiſt him: the continual rains had ſo deepened the roads, that the artillery could hardly be got forward, and the de-

tachment did not advance more than twenty-four miles from eight in the morning, to four in the afternoon of the following day.

General Starke, who commanded at Bennington, with Colonel Warner, on receiving intelligence of the reſpective ſituation of both parties, ſaw the neceſſity of attacking the firſt, before it could effect a
Auguſt 16, junction with the laſt. He advanced upon
1777. Colonel Baum with the utmoſt diligence, and incloſed him on all ſides. A body of Provincial Loyaliſts, who made part of his detachment, on the approach of the Americans, would have perſuaded him that they were Loyaliſts like themſelves, coming up to join him; but their miſtake was ſoon diſcovered. The defences he had haſtily raiſed were forced, after a valiant reſiſtance, and the greateſt part of his detachment, overpowered by numbers, made the beſt of their way to the woods.—But he was ſo completely ſurrounded with his countrymen, that they found it impoſſible to eſcape.—In this ſituation, after expending all their ammunition, they drew their ſabres, and bravely charged the Americans, with the Colonel at their head. But fortune did not ſecond their valour; they were borne down by ſuperiority of number, and were all either killed or taken, with their Colonel, who did not ſurrender till he was wounded and diſabled.

Unhappily for Colonel Breyman, he was at this time puſhing forwards, in order to join the defeated party, the diſaſter of which he had no information of. It was about four in the afternoon when he reached the ground on which the engagement had happened, and found himſelf aſſailed on all ſides. Though his men were much haraſſed and fatigued, they received the enemy with great ſpirit, repulſed and drove them from their poſts; but their ſuperior multitude enabling them to pour

and compelled Breyman's party to retire. This, however, they did not do till they had fired forty rounds a man, after which, wanting ammunition, they withdrew under cover of the night.

Five or ſix hundred men were loſt in theſe two actions, moſt of whom were made priſoners. But this loſs was nothing when compared to the diminution of that dread in which the Provincials had held the Britiſh and German troops until this unfortunate event. It filled them with courage, and with hope of ſtill further ſucceſſes: it taught them that regular and diſciplined ſoldiers were not always ſure of victory; it removed, in ſhort, all their fears, and inſpired them with a boldneſs and confidence which they had never felt till this day.

Nor was the news received by the Britiſh army without anxiety. Accuſtomed to ſucceſs ever ſince the commencement of the campaign, they were not a little ſurprized at this unexpected check. Though it did not diminiſh their courage, nor abate their ardour, it ſomewhat cooled that unbounded confidence of victory, which had induced them to look upon the enemy with contempt.

During theſe tranſactions, Colonel St. Leger was preſſing with great vigour the ſiege of Fort Stan-
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The Colonel did not neglect this opportunity of trying to intimidate the garriſon into a ſurrender. He repreſented the Provincial ſtrength as entirely broken throughout the Northern Provinces, and that General Burgoyne had penetrated to Albany, where he was now receiving the ſubmiſſion of all

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the neighbouring diſtricts. He reminded them of the danger to be apprehended from the Indians in his army, were the place to be taken by aſſault, and how hard a taſk it would be to reſtrain them from maſſacreing every perſon that fell into their hands, in revenge for the number of their countrymen who had fallen in the attack of the convoy.

But theſe repreſentations had no effect on the garriſon: the Governor, Colonel Ganſevort, a very reſolute man, made anſwer, that he would maintain the fort as long as his men would ſtand by him, and that he was not to be intimidated by threats from the diſcharge of his duty.

The Colonel was much diſappointed in his expectations of the condition of Fort Stanwix. It was in a much better ſtate of defence than it had been reported, and the garriſon conſiſted of ſelected men. The number of regular troops he had with him, was not ſufficient to make any impreſſions of terror on their minds; and the Indians, of whom great part of his force conſiſted, were daily becoming more ungovernable, from the diſſatisfaction they felt at the loſs of their countrymen in the late engagement, and the little hopes they entertained of getting any plunder, which was the only motive that induced them to join the Britiſh forces. Inſtead of being diſpirited, the garriſon, headed by Colonel Willet, the ſecond in command, made ſeveral ſucceſsful ſallies. This bold and enterpriſing officer undertook, with one more, a moſt daring and dangerous attempt. He ventured out of the fort, eluded the vigilance of the enemy, and traverſed a country filled with Indian parties on the look-out, in order to haſten the relief that was ſo much wanted.

In this diſagreeable ſituation, a report was brought to Colonel St. Leger by the Indians, that General

ſand men to attack the beſiegers. Upon this he aſſured them, that he would give him the meeting with the Britiſh troops under his command, and that he would faithfully ſtand by them, if they would perform their part, and accompany him to action. To ſhow them that he was in earneſt, he took their chiefs with him to pitch upon the ground where to meet the Provincials. But while he was ſtriving to encourage and prevail upon them to remain true to their engagements, further intelligence was brought that General Burgoyne had been defeated with great ſlaughter, and was now flying before the Provincial army. Hereupon numbers of the Indians immediately deſerted him, and the remainder threatened to follow, if he did not himſelf break up the ſiege and retire.

A remonſtrance of this nature obliged the Colonel to aſſent to their demands. A retreat was inſtantly made; but from the unhappy circumſtances to which this behaviour of the Indians had reduced him, it was attended with ſo much precipitation and diſorder, that the tents, with part of the artillery and ſtores, were loſt. He was not without apprehenſions that they harboured ſiniſter deſigns reſpecting his own people. His fears were juſt;—they plundered the boats of their ſtores and proviſions, and carried off the baggage belonging to the officers; and they robbed and maſſacred all the ſtragglers that were at a diſtance from the main body.—This unfortunate event happened on the twenty-ſecond of Auguſt.

The report ſpread by the Indians to compel the Britiſh troops to raiſe the ſiege of Fort Stanwix, was not without foundation. General Arnold was advancing with two thouſand men to attack the beſiegers. He was himſelf, with eight or nine hundred, haſtening forwards with all ſpeed; and in or-

the woods, hoping to ſurprize them before they could make good their retreat. But he did not arrive till two days after the ſiege had been raiſed.

The failure of the expedition againſt Fort Stanwix, together with the defeat at Bennington, were very ſevere blows to the Britiſh intereſt in thoſe parts. They animated the Americans to a ſurpriſing degree. They began now confidently to promiſe themſelves that General Burgoyne himſelf would ſhare the ſame fate as his officers.

He ſtill continued in his camp in the neighbourhood of Saratoga, where he was exerting himſelf in forwarding ſtores, and requiſites of all kinds from Lake George, intending, as ſoon as he had laid in a ſufficient ſtock, to march directly in queſt of the enemy, and endeavour to force his way through all obſtructions.

Having, with indefatigable pains, amaſſed proviſions, and other neceſſaries, in ſufficient quantity to laſt out a month, he threw a bridge of boats on the Hudſon, and croſſed his army over in the middle of September, encamping it on the hills and plains about Saratoga. The enemy was then at Still-water, under the command of General Gates, an officer upon whoſe profeſſional knowledge and experience the Americans placed very great dependence.

In General Burgoyne's progreſs towards the enemy, the woodineſs of the country obſtructed him continually, and the creeks and ſwamps were ſo numerous, that much of his time was taken up in conſtructing bridges, and in repairing thoſe which had been deſtroyed. As ſoon as he approached the Provincial army, he determined to make an attack.—He put himſelf at the head of the central diviſion of his army, General Frazer and Colonel Breyman were on his right, and Generals Philips and Reide-

ſel on his left. In this order he marched to the enemy on the nineteenth of September.

The Americans, elated with their late ſucceſſes, did not upon this occaſion wait to be attacked. They marched out of their camp, and advanced upon the central diviſion, which they engaged with a firmneſs and reſolution that had never before been experienced from them. General Arnold, lately returned from his expedition to the Mohawk river, had a principal ſhare in the tranſactions of this day. At the head of a diviſion compoſed of his beſt ſoldiers, he directed his attack chiefly on three regiments, the poſition of which expoſed them moſt, and upon which, for that reaſon, he hoped to make the readier impreſſion; theſe were the twentieth, twenty-firſt, and ſixty-ſecond. With the moſt intrepid and ſoldier-like perſeverance, they maintained their ground againſt the repeated efforts of far ſuperior numbers, which were continually refreſhed, and aſſailed them with unabated fury. The burthen of the day fell upon them, and they continued engaged till ſun-ſet. General Frazer, on the right, rendered them occaſionally good ſervice; but he could only do it by detached parties. The poſt he occupied was of too much conſequence to be relinquiſhed; a large body of the enemy lay in a wood fronting him, watching an opportunity to ſeize it.

General Philips, who commanded on the left, on hearing of the danger to which thoſe regiments as well as the central diviſion were expoſed, pierced through a wood that lay between, and came up to their aſſiſtance at a very critical juncture. General Arnold was preſſing them ſo vigorouſly, that they were almoſt borne down with the weight of numbers. By this ſeaſonable help they were enabled to reſiſt him. The artillery brought up by General Philips was of eſſential ſervice upon this occaſion; it did ſuch execution among the enemy, that though

they continued the fight, it was no longer with the ſame violence with which it had begun. The arrival of General Reideſel, who followed General Philips, with another part of the left wing, completed the ſucceſs which had been gained. He charged the enemy ſo effectually, that they began gradually to give way; they did not however totally retire till on the very cloſe of day, after having maintained a well-fought action from three in the afternoon.

This was a real battle on both ſides. Hitherto the Provincial troops had been cautious of engaging without the Protection of works and defences; but they now came forth undauntedly, and encountered the Roval army upon equal ground. The conflict was kept up near five hours with good order, courage, and a degree of obſtinacy that had never been expected, and excited, on that account, the more ſurprize and alarm. It was now foreſeen, that inſtead of a flying and diſpirited enemy, they would have a numerous and reſolute army to encounter, equally with themſelves diſpoſed to ſtand their ground, and commanded by chiefs wh activity and ſpirit they found, from experience, would leave no advantage unimproved.

The loſs on both ſides was ſevere; but the greater number fell on that of the Provincials, of whom upwards of fifteen hundred were computed to have been killed and wounded. The liſt of the ſlain and wounded in the Britiſh army did not exceed three hundred and thirty. Among thoſe Britiſh officers who diſtinguiſhed themſelves, were Generals Frazer and Hamilton, to whom much of the honours of the day were due. Captain Jones of the artillery, who was ſlain, did eminent ſervice. After keeping poſſeſſion of the field of battle during the night, the Britiſh army took poſt in the morning in front of the enemy, and within cannon-ſhot of his lines.

But though the day was won, this action produced detrimental conſequences. The firſt was a viſible dimunition of the alacrity of the Indians in the Britiſh army. The expectations of plunder by which they had been attracted, began now to fail them entirely. They ſaw nothing before them but hardſhips and warfare. Theſe were no motives to retain a people ſo little intereſted in the quarrel between Britain and her Colonies; and from this period they gradually deſerted in ſuch numbers, that in a ſhort time they were almoſt reduced to nothing.

Little more fidelity was experienced on the part of the Canadians, or even the Coloniſts who had joined the Britiſh troops. They alſo withdrew by degrees, as ſoon as they began to perceive that the reſiſtance of the Americans would prove more formidable than it had been at firſt expected.

Theſe various deſertions happened at a time when their fidelity and conſtancy were more than ever wanted, and proved the more mortifying, as an acceſſion of ſtrength had been promiſed and depended upon, from both theſe quarters, at the very ſeaſon when they broke their word in ſo ignominious a manner.

But excluſive of theſe, other ſuccours of much more importance had been hoped for by the Britiſh General. From the firſt commencement of his expedition, he had promiſed himſelf a ſtrong reinforcement from that part of the Britiſh army which was ſtationed at New York. He relied on its being able to make its way to Albany, and to join him there. Such a junction, he doubted not, would have given a deciſive turn to all his future operations, and completed the intent of his expedition.

In this juncture, he received a letter from Sir Henry Clinton, who then commanded in chief at New York. It was written in cypher, and through

at length ſafely conveyed to his hands. It informed him, that Sir Henry Clinton intended to make a diverſion in his favour on the North River, by an attack on Fort Montgomery, and other places of ſtrength, lately conſtructed by the Provincials, in order to bar the paſſage to Albany.

This intelligence did not hold out ſuch effectual aſſiſtance as General Burgoyne had kept in view; nevertheleſs it afforded him hope, that by ſuch a diverſion as was propoſed, General Gates would be compelled to make large detachments from his army, in order to oppoſe the operations on the North River: this would, of courſe, weaken that General's army, and facilitate the progreſs of his own.

In return to the letter he had received, he diſpatched to Sir Henry Clinton, ſome truſty perſons, ſecretly, and in diſguiſe, and who all went by different ways, with a full account of his preſent ſituation; urging him to a ſpeedy execution of the diverſion he had propoſed, and informing him that he was provided with ſufficient neceſſaries, to hold out in his preſent poſition, till about the middle of October; till which time he was determined to maintain it, in expectation of a change of circumſtances in his favour.

The American army under General Gates, was in the mean time continually encreaſing, through the arrival of all the militia, and continental troops that could poſſibly be ſpared. The New England people were duly conſcious how much their all was at ſtake, and were at the ſame time perſuaded that an opportunity was now preſenting itſelf, which, if judiciouſly managed, would prove one of the moſt auſpicious that fortune had yet thrown into their hands for the benefit of the common cauſe.

In this idea nothing was omitted to improve it to the utmoſt. Excluſive of the troops and militia,

a warmth for the ſervice of the public was manifeſted, that entirely baniſhed from the minds of people all doubt of ſucceſs, and excited a full perſuaſion, that the Britiſh army would be compelled to retire, and that the hopes in which Britain had been ſo ſanguine, of reducing the New England Provinces, would be completely fruſtrated.

Such were the clear expectations of all the Americans in thoſe parts. But the Generals who commanded the army that was now oppoſed to General Burgoyne, began to conceive much higher hopes. The concurrance of circumſtances was ſuch, as laid before them the practicability of rendering the various obſtructions, that had ſo powerfully retarded the progreſs of the Britiſh army, no leſs impedimental in its return.

This idea was further confirmed by the impoſſibility of the Britiſh army's moving forwards in its preſent condition, and the determination it ſeemed to have taken of acting ſolely on the defenſive, until ſuch an alteration of affairs happened, as would enable it to act otherwiſe. But of this they had no apprehenſion. General Waſhington in the middle provinces, though defeated, ſtill maintained his ground with the greateſt vigour; and the country between New York and Albany, where it was known that General Burgoyne expected a diverſion in his favour, was at that time well guarded, and in a perfect ſtate of defence, wherever an attack was apprehended.

General Burgoyne himſelf no longer looked upon the expedition he had been ſent upon, with the ſame hope he had cheriſhed when it begun. He ſaw a numerous enemy gathering round him from all quarters, whoſe force was hourly augmenting, while his own had been conſiderably diminiſhed by large deſertions, and frequent loſſes in battle, and was from the ſame cauſes daily decreaſing. He now

found it neceſſary to fortify his camp, and to conſtruct ſtrong works for the protection of his magazines and hoſpitals, which he had not a ſufficiency of troops to guard without ſuch an additional ſecurity, ſhould he judge it neceſſary to come to an engagement, or make an attempt of any conſequence upon the enemy.

While he was in this embraſſed ſituation, a project was formed by the New England people, to penetrate to the Lakes by the weſtern frontiers of New Hampſhire, and the upper countries on the Connecticut river, and to cut off his communication with Canada, by repoſſeſſing themſelves of Ticonderoga, and the other forts and paſſes in that country.

General Lincoln was placed at the head of the expedition; and the Colonels Brown, Johnſton, and Woodbury, men of known courage and activity, were appointed to act under his directions. They ſet out each with about five hundred men, and conducted the enterprize with ſo much ſkilfulneſs and ſecrecy, that they ſurprized all the out-poſts in the neighbourhood of Ticonderoga, taking a great number of priſoners and boats, together with ſome armed veſſels. They ſummoned Brigadier Powel, who commanded at Ticonderoga, to ſurrender, and upon his refuſal, made ſeveral attacks upon the fort, though without ſucceſs.

In the mean time the ſituation of the Britiſh army, under General Burgoyne, was becoming daily more critical. From the uncertainty of receiving ſupplies of proviſions, he was obliged, in the beginning of October, to diminiſh the army's allowance. To this meaſure, from its neceſſity, they ſubmitted with the moſt exemplary acquieſcence.

The twelfth of October was approaching. This was the term till which the army was to tarry in its preſent encampment. The ſeventh was already

had been propoſed for its relief. In this alarming ſtate of things, the General, preſerving the intrepidity of his character, reſolved upon a movement towards the enemy.

He advanced accordingly upon the left wing of the Provincial army, in order to reconnoitre the ground it occupied; intending, if it was found practicable, to force his way forward through that quarter, or to ſecure it for the purpoſe of a retreat, if that ſhould appear neceſſary.

The body of troops employed for this purpoſe, conſiſted of fifteen hundred men. It was all that could with ſafety be drawn from the guard of the camp, in the preſent reduced ſtate of the army. The force of the enemy in front of that which remained for its defence, was more than double to it.

This detachment advanced within a mile of the
Oct. 7, enemy's left wing; but was prevented
1777. from proceeding any further, by a ſudden and impetuous attack made upon the Britiſh left. Major Ackland, at the head of the grenadiers, received the enemy with great reſolution. A body of Germans, poſted near the Britiſh grenadiers, was preparing to come to their relief; but the enemy's ſuperiority of number enabling them to extend their front, the Germans themſelves were attacked, and with difficulty ſtood their ground. Some even gave way.

General Burgoyne, on perceiving their diſtreſs, ordered a reinforcement to haſten to their aſſiſtance from the right. It was brought up with all ſpeed by General Frazer, and preſerved them from being entirely broken; but this brave officer was ſlain upon that occaſion.

The danger to which the detachment was expoſed from this unexpected attack on the left, compelled it to retire; though not without great difficulty.

A large party of the enemy endeavoured to cut off its retreat, and the moſt deſperate efforts were neceſſary to ſecure it.

The troops had hardly regained the camp, when it was aſſaulted with the greateſt fury. The attack was principally directed againſt the poſt occupied by the light infantry under Lord Belcarras. But it was defended with great ſpirit. The enemy, led on by General Arnold, behaved after his example, with the utmoſt vigour and courage; but in the moment he was on the point of forcing his way into the entrenchments, he received a dangerous wound; and his party unable to overcome the obſtinate reſiſtance they met with, were at length completely repulſed.

But they ſucceeded in the attack they made on the entrenchments of the German reſerve on the right. Colonel Breyman was killed after a valiant defence, and his countrymen routed with great ſlaughter; and the loſs of their artillery and baggage. This proved a heavy misfortune. It gave the enemy an opening on the right and rear of the Britiſh army. Thus ended this unfortunate engagement, which was maintained with ſuch obſtinacy, that it laſted till night put an end to it.

The loſſes ſuſtained by the Britiſh army upon this day, were truly fatal: that of General Frazer was deeply regretted by the whole army: his perſonal and profeſſional character were equally eminent. The liſt of the killed and wounded amounted, excluſive of the Germans, to near twelve hundred, among whom were ſeventy officers. The ſame liſt on the ſide of the Americans, was much greater: General Lincoln was among the wounded, as well as General Arnold.

The advantages obtained by the enemy, rendered the poſition of the Britiſh army ſo dangerous, that it was judged neceſſary to alter it that very

night, in order to reduce the enemy to the neceſſity of changing alſo their own diſpoſition.

This bold, but requiſite movement, was executed with great order, and without any loſs. The artillery, the camp, and its appurtenances, were all removed before morning, to a more convenient
Oct. 8, ground, where the Britiſh General contiſ1777. nued to offer battle to the enemy the whole of the ſucceeding day.

But he did not remain long in his new poſition: the American Generals now entertained the moſt ſanguine hope of overcoming the Britiſh army without expoſing themſelves to the riſk of another battle. They took every meaſure to ſurround and preſs it in ſuch a manner, as to cut off all communication, and deprive it of all ſupplies.

To this intent they advanced in great force, propoſing to turn his right wing, which would have effectually incloſed him. On intelligence of this motion, he ſaw the neceeſſity of removing inſtantly, and determined to retire towards Saratoga. The army began accordingly to move at nine that very evening; and though within muſket ſhot of the enemy, and incumbered with all its baggage, it retreated without loſs. The only retardment was occaſioned by heavy rains, and the difficulty of guarding the boats which carried the proviſions.

The principal mortification upon this occaſion, aroſe from the neceſſity of abandoning the hoſpital with the ſick and wounded. They fell of courſe into the hands of the American General, who treated them with great kindneſs and humanity.

On its arrival at Saratoga, the army found that the Americans had ſtationed a great force to impede its paſſage over the Hudſon's river, of which they occupied the principal ford.

As the only method of effecting a retreat, was by ſecuring a paſſage to Lake George, a detachment

of workmen was diſpatched, ſtrongly eſcorted, to repair the bridges, and clear the road to fort Edward. But the enemy ſeeming to prepare for an attack, the force that guarded the workmen was recalled; and being left without protection, they were obliged to abandon the work.

The banks of Hudſon's river, oppoſite to thoſe occupied by the Britiſh army, were covered with American markſmen, who kept a perpetual fire upon thoſe who had the charge of the proviſion boats belonging to the Britiſh army. Many of them were taken. In order to ſecure the proviſions, it was found requiſite to land and convey them to the camp. This was not done however without difficulty and loſs.

Several councils of war were now held on the propereſt means of effecting a retreat to fort Edward. The only method that ſeemed practicable in any reſpect, was attended with ſuch danger, as afforded but little hope of its ſucceeding. This was to march to it by night: the ſoldiers carrying the proviſions upon their backs, and leaving the baggage, and every other incumbrance behind, and to force a paſſage at the fords, either at, or above that fort.

But while the army was preparing to carry this bold, but deſperate ſcheme into execution, the ſcouts that had been diſpatched to explore the motions of the enemy, returned with an account that they had caſt up ſtrong entrenchments oppoſite thoſe fords, and had taken poſſeſſion of the high ground between fort Edward and fort George, and raiſed defences well provided with cannon. Their parties were extended every where along the oppoſite ſhore of the Hudſon, keeping a continual look out on every part of the river, where the leaſt poſſibility of a paſſage was apprehended. Some had even croſſed it to

army. Thus the leaſt movement it made was immediately diſcovered.

In the mean while, the American army was hourly encreaſing. Excluſive of their troops and militia, their camp was continually filling by the numbers that came on every ſide, to act as volunteers, and to ſhare in the honour of deſtroying the Britiſh army, or forcing it to ſurrender. One of theſe alternatives was deemed inevitable. The force under General Gates amounted at this time to upwards of ſixteen thouſand men, while that under General Burgoyne, was ſo diminiſhed, as hardly to conſiſt of three thouſand five hundred, fit for actual ſervice.

No doubt was any longer entertained that the American General would ſucceed in the deſign he had projected. But notwithſtanding all theſe advantages, this cautious officer, fully conſcious of what exertions the Britiſh troops were capable in a deſperate exigency, took as many precautions againſt this handful of men, as if the ſuperiority lay on their ſide. The ground on which he was encamped, was, from its nature, and the works he had thrown up, inattackable, and it almoſt incloſed the Britiſh army.

In this perilous ſituation, it poſted itſelf in the beſt manner that was practicable, fortifying the camp, and preparing for any attempt the enemy might, from its weak condition, be prompted to make. The men lay continually upon their arms, expecting hourly to be attacked: the cannonading from the enemy was inceſſant; and their rifle and grape ſhot reached every part of the camp.

The courage and conſtancy of the Britiſh troops in the midſt of this arduous trial, was aſtoniſhing. They ſtill retained their ſpirits, in hope that either

enemy might give them an opportunity of fighting.

The thirteenth of October was now come. This was the day until which it had been determined to endure all extremities, in maintaining their ground againſt the enemy. After waiting all the day, in anxious expectation of what it would produce, no proſpect of aſſiſtance appearing, and no reaſonable hope of any remaining; it was thought proper in the evening, to take an exact account of the proviſions left. They amounted, upon ſhort allowance, to no more than three days ſubſiſtence a man.

In this ſtate of diſtreſs, ſurrounded by more than four times his number, and cut off from all means of retreat, the Britiſh General called a council of war; to which all the Generals, Field Officers, and Captains commanding corps, were ſummoned. Their unanimous opinion was, that in the preſent circumſtances, they could do no otherwiſe than treat with the enemy.

In conſequence of this determination, a meſſenger was ſent the next morning to notify it to the American General, and to lay thoſe terms before him, upon which the Britiſh General would conſent to treat.

The terms that were offered, evinced a ſpirit and ſenſe of honour in the Britiſh commander, which no preſſures could ſubdue. Nor were ſentiments of generoſity wanting in the American General. Being himſelf a native of Britain, it is not improbable that, though engaged in the cauſe of America, he ſtill retained thoſe feelings for the reputation of his country, of which, it has long been obſerved, that military men, more than all others, are never willing to diveſt themſelves, though in arms againſt it.

A convention was ſettled, the articles of which were, that the Britiſh army ſhould march out of its lines

lines with all the honours of war, and accompanied by its field artillery, to a place agreed, where they ſhould pile their arms, by word of command from their own officers.

A free paſſage to Great Britain was allowed them, on condition of not ſerving again in America during the preſent war.

The army was not to be ſeparated, and the officers were to be at liberty to aſſemble the ſoldiers for roll calling, and other neceſſary purpoſes of regularity.

All individuals belonging to the army, were to retain their private property, upon delivering up the public ſtores; and no baggage was to be ſearched or moleſted.

The officers were to be admitted on their parole, to wear their ſide arms, and to be quartered according to their rank.

All perſons following the camp, and employed in the ſervice of the army, of whatever country, or denomination, were to be included in this convention.

Such Canadians as had attended the army, were to be permitted to return to their country, ſubject to the ſame conditions.

The Britiſh commander was to have the liberty of ſending diſpatches unopened to Great Britain, Canada, and New York.

Such were the articles of capitulation agreed upon between the Britiſh and American Generals. When the forlorn ſituation of the Britiſh army is duly conſidered, and that no poſſibility appeared of its being able to effect a retreat, it muſt be allowed that the American General acted with great moderation.

It muſt alſo be admitted, on the other hand, that the firmneſs and reſolution diſplayed on this occa-

ſion, by the Britiſh General, were no leſs conducive in obtaining honourable terms.

It had been propoſed at firſt, by the American General, that the Britiſh troops ſhould be drawn up in their encampment, and there ordered to ground their arms. But ſuch a propoſal was rejected without an inſtant's heſitation. General Burgoyne ſent immediately a meſſage to General Gates, to acquaint him, that unleſs he receded from this demand, all treaty ſhould end at once; that the Britiſh troops were to a man determined to proceed to any act of deſperation ſooner than ſubmit to it, and ſhould that evening conſider the ceſſation of arms that had been agreed upon for the purpoſe of treating, as entirely at an end.

So intrepid a meſſage, delivered upon cool deliberation, in ſuch circumſtances of diſtreſs, by men whom the American army conſidered at its mercy, convinced General Gates that it would be wiſer to yield up the point of honour, than ſo contend for it with men who were ſo juſtly entitled to it, and ſo firmly reſolved not to recede. It ſhowed him, too, that terms of rigour would not be accepted by ſuch men, and that the only ſafe method of preſerving his advantages, was to uſe them with moderation.

On the ſeventeenth of October, at nine in the morning, the Britiſh army marched out of its lines, and depoſited its arms at the place appointed. A memorable inſtance of magnanimity and military politeneſs is ſaid to have happened on this occaſion, and which reflected much honour on the character of General Gates. Senſible of the mortification attending ſuch a reverſe of fortune, and unwilling to aggravate it by any circumſtance that might prove offenſive to the Britiſh troops, in their preſent calamity, he kept the American ſoldiery within their

that it might not have them for ſpectators of ſo humiliating a tranſaction.

The number of thoſe who laid down their arms amounted, according to the American accounts, to five thouſand ſeven hundred and fifty, including the irregulars, Canadians, and all the people following the camp. The liſt of ſick and wounded, left in the camp when the army retreated to Saratoga, conſiſted of five hundred and twenty-eight. Excluſive of the above, the numbers of killed, wounded, taken, and deſerted, of Britiſh, German, and Canadian troops, from the ſixth of July, when the campaign was opened by the taking of Ticonderoga, to the ſeventeenth of October, when it cloſed by the convention of Saratoga, were computed at near three thouſand.

The ſtores and implements of war that fell into the hands of the Americans, were very conſiderable. The artillery conſiſted of thirty-five braſs field-pieces; there were ſeven thouſand ſtands of arms, beſides cloathing for a like number, the tents and military cheſt, and a variety of other articles much wanted by the Americans.

Such was the fate of the expedition under General Burgoyne.—It had been undertaken with the greateſt proſpect of ſucceſs, from the goodneſs of the troops, and the excellence of the commanders; but the difficulties, though partly foreſeen, were not expected to be ſuch as they proved in reality.—When they were duly taken into conſideration, it was the opinion of very competent judges, that the progreſs made by the Britiſh army, amidſt ſuch a complication of impediments and diſtreſſes, was truly wonderful in every reſpect; and that its failure at laſt was not ſo ſurpriſing, as the perſeverance and ſpirit with which it ſtruggled with obſtructions and hardſhips, which, it ſoon became evident

evident to every man in the army, would, in all probability, prove finally insurmountable.

While these misfortunes attended the British arms in the interior parts of New England, they were more successful in other quarters. In pursuance of the notice sent to General Burgoyne, Sir Henry Clinton was employed in an expedition up the North River, in order to make a diversion in his favour. The force under his command consisted of three thousand men; and he was accompanied by Commodore Hotham, with a considerable number of ships of war and armed vessels. Their intention was to reduce forts Montgomery and Clinton, two places of strength, but rather at present in a state of unguardedness, from the necessity of unfurnishing every post to reinforce the army that was opposing General Burgoyne, and from the little apprehension of an attempt upon them.

For this reason it was determined to attack them by surprize. They were situated opposite to each other, on the sides of a creek that came down from the mountains to the North River, and they communicated with each other by a bridge over the creek. In order to effect the intended surprize, several feints were made, and the troops were landed at a considerable distance from the forts, to which they proceeded in two separate divisions. After a long and difficult march through a mountainous country, they both arrived at the same time, each on that side of the creek where the fort stood which it was respectively to attack.

By this unexpected appearance of the troops by land, and the sudden arrival of the shipping up the creek, the garrisons were equally surprised and terrified. The gallies came up so close as to strike the very walls with their oars. The assault on both the forts was so impetuous and animated, that though a courageous defence was made, they were taken

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by ſtorm, with no inconſiderable ſlaughter of the garriſons.

The loſs of theſe forts was attended by that of two large frigates, and other veſſels, which were ſet on fire by the enemy, to prevent their being taken. Fort Conſtitution, another place of ſome ſtrength, was, on the approach of the Britiſh troops and ſhipping, deſtroyed in the ſame manner. Continental Village, a place lately ſettled, and in a thriving condition, was at the ſame time committed to the flames, by a party under Governor Tryon. This was in particular a ſevere loſs; as, excluſive of other advantages, it was conveniently ſituated for military operations, and had barracks for near two thouſand men.

This expedition was very detrimental to the Americans. Seventy large pieces of cannon were taken from them in the forts, beſides a large quantity of ſmaller artillery, and of warlike ſtores and proviſions. A large boom and chain, reaching acroſs the river from Fort Montgomery, to a point of land called St. Anthony's Noſe, was in part deſtroyed, and partly carried away. It was ſuppoſed to have coſt ſeventy thouſand pounds, and was looked upon as a work of great induſtry and labour. Another boom of not much inferior value was deſtroyed near Fort Conſtitution.

In theſe different attacks, the loſs on the Britiſh ſide was ſmall in number, but ſome officers of great merit were killed. Colonel Campbell fell in the aſſault of Fort Montgomery, where he was principal in command, and by his judicious diſpoſition greatly contributed to its being taken. Majors Sill and Grant, two excellent officers, were alſo ſlain; as was Count Grabouſky, a Poliſh nobleman of diſtinguiſhed bravery, and aid-de-camp to Sir Henry Clinton.

Sir James Wallace, with ſome frigates, and General Vaughan, with a body of troops on board ſome tranſports, proceeded farther up the river to Eſopus, a very flouriſhing and conſiderable place. Here the Americans had thrown up works, and ſeemed determined to make a reſolute defence.—General Vaughan landing his troops, attacked their batteries, and took or ſpiked all their guns. The chief damage they ſuſtained on this occaſion, was the deſtruction of the town of Eſopus, which was reduced to aſhes.

The devaſtation and ruin of the places that took place in theſe expeditions up the North River, were cauſes of great irritation among the Americans.—They complained that while a generous capitulation was granted to the army under General Burgoyne, the Britiſh troops at that very time were carrying fire and deſolation wherever they had it in their power. General Gates on this occaſion wrote a very ſevere and expoſtulating letter to General Vaughan.

In order, at the ſame time, to put a ſtop to the progreſs of the Britiſh arms in this quarter, he repaired to the banks of the North River with a very powerful body of the American regulars; but before he could reach it, the Britiſh troops had completed the intent of their expedition. They had diſmantled the forts, and demoliſhed all the works along the river.

But theſe were ſmall loſſes in compariſon to thoſe which Britain had ſuſtained in the courſe of this unfortunate campaign, and ſerved rather to exaſperate, than to diſtreſs the Americans, who conſidered them as the effects of rage and diſappointment.

Great was the grief and dejection experienced and unfeignedly expreſſed in Britain, upon receiving the heavy tidings of the fate of the Britiſh army

under General Burgoyne. The ſorrow felt upon this occaſion was equal to the ſurprize it excited; and this was the greater, as victory and conqueſt, in their fulleſt extent, had been the ſanguine and hourly expectation from that part of America where he commanded. His courage, his military abilities, his zeal in the cauſe,—all theſe added to his firſt ſucceſſes, had raiſed his character, and that of his troops, ſo high, that it was imagined nothing could ſtand before them, and that all the north of America would unqueſtionably be ſubdued before the end of the campaign.

The intelligence of his ſucceſs had renewed the former inſinuations of want of ſpirit and capacity in the Americans. They even ſuffered in the eſtimation of thoſe who wiſhed well to their cauſe. It began to be apprehended among their warmeſt partiſans, that they would at laſt be compelled to that unconditional ſubmiſſion which had been rejected with ſo much diſdain in America, and which their friends in Britain dreaded the conſequences of no leſs than themſelves, from their fear of the danger that might reſult from it to the conſtitution at home.

To theſe, the news of the convention at Saratoga, though highly diſagreeable, when viewed in the light of a national diſgrace, was no leſs acceptable when conſidered as a prevention of thoſe perils to which the freedom of this country would, in their opinion, have been expoſed, had the expedition ſucceeded according to the wiſhes of the adverſe party.

To thoſe European ſtates and nations who from habit, prejudice, or envy, had ſo long been deſirous of the downfal of Britiſh grandeur, the intelligence of what had befallen the Britiſh army at Saratoga, was a matter of open and unconcealed exultation. It was univerſally received among them as the defeat and ruin of

Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, at the battle of Pultowa, had formerly been by thoſe powers whom that terrible warrior had ſo long kept in awe. All the foes to Britain began now to conſult in what manner they ſhould improve ſuch an event to their own advantage, and to her further detriment.

France, in particular, intereſted herſelf, on this occaſion, in a manner that plainly indicated ſhe would not long conceal the projects that were then in agitation in her councils. Her miniſters were the readier to eſpouſe the cauſe of the Americans, as herein they would coincide with the general views and deſires of the nation at large. Excluſive of the national and hereditary inveteracy of the French to the Engliſh, they conſidered them, in the preſent caſe, as acting an unjuſtifiable part in reſpect of the Americans. They looked upon themſelves, therefore, as doubly authoriſed to aſſiſt them; they were prompted by motives of policy, and equally by thoſe of juſtice.

Influenced by theſe principles, people of all ranks and denominations exerted themſelves in their favour. But it was principally among the military claſſes this ardour was eminently conſpicuous. The Iriſh Brigade, ſo famous for the ſervices it had rendered France, eſpecially in its wars with England, furniſhed a number of brave officers to America: nor were the other French regiments deficient in this ſpirit of general adventure in the cauſe of the Britiſh Colonies againſt their parent-ſtate.

Numbers of the young nobility in France were eager to ſignalize themſelves on this occaſion, but none exerted himſelf ſo conſpicuouſly as the Marquis de la Fayette, a young nobleman of the firſt rank and fortune. Impelled by that enthuſiaſtic ardour which ariſes from a liberal education, and a native generoſity of ſentiments, he embarked in the cauſe of America from a conviction that it was a juſt

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DE LA FAYETTE.
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Angus Sculp.

one, and that they were contending for rights to which they had an evident claim. In this perſuaſion, he purchaſed a veſſel, loaded her with military ſtores, and accompanied by ſeveral of his friends, he ſailed in her to America, where he preſented her to Congreſs, together with his ſervices. He was received with the reſpect due to his rank, and the acknowledgment that his offers merited. A command was conferred upon him, and he loſt no opportunity of diſtinguiſhing himſelf. Others of the French nobleſſe and army followed his example.—Roche du Fermoy was in the army that acted againſt General Burgoyne: De Coudray, an officer of rank in the French army, was drowned in the Schuylkill, a few days after the battle of Brandywine, in his eagerneſs to croſs it, in order to join General Waſhington's army, that was reported to be on the point of engaging. Baron St. Ovary was another volunteer in their ſervice.

But it was not only France that ſupplied them with a number of brave officers and volunteers.—Others came from various parts of Europe; Germany eſpecially, a country, that from the perpetual quarrels among its own ſovereigns, and the many wars of which it has of latter times been the unhappy ſcene, abounds in military men more than any other part of Europe.

Through the aſſiſtance of theſe many foreigners, the American armies were daily improving in diſcipline and military ſkill. Together with theſe, their ſpirits and hopes increaſed in the ſame proportion. The proſperity with which they cloſed the preſent campaign on the frontiers of Canada, filled them with no unreaſonable expectation, that it would influence the remainder of the war eſſentially in their favour.

Nor did they conſider their want of ſucceſs in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia as any thing deci-

They acknowledged the bravery and military exertions of the Britiſh General and his troops; but they viewed their exploits in no other light than as acquiſitions of honour, and remained fully perſuaded, that inſtead of permanent advantages, they would only be productive of additional difficulties. The nature of the country, they were confident, would fight againſt all the efforts of Great Britain. Had its armies been twice as numerous, their opinion was, they would only have covered twice the quantity of ground, and obliged the Coloniſts to double their pains and endeavours to reſiſt them.

In this idea, they looked upon all the generalſhip and courage that had been, or might be employed againſt them, only as protractions of the war. Such a notion could not fail to endue them with the moſt obſtinate perſeverance, as it was in ſome meaſure well founded. It was ſtrongly propagated by all thoſe, who from the conſideration they had acquired, and the eminence to which they had riſen by means of the preſent troubles, found it their intereſt to inculcate ſuch a belief. Hence it was, that in their utmoſt extremities, they never admitted a moment's deſpair; and that whatever defeats and diſappointments they met with, inſtead of brooding over, and being depreſſed by them, they immediately ſet about the means of repairing them. Had the ſituation of the country been far leſs favourable to them, and their reſources much weaker than they really were, ſuch a diſpoſition alone muſt have proved a great, and almoſt unconquerable ſupport.

CHAP. XXIX.

Tranſactions in Great Britain relating to America.

1777.

THE conſequences of the war with America were now beginning to be felt in a manner that occaſioned much complaint among the mercantile claſſes. The depredations of the American privateers extended to every part of Europe, as well as the Weſt Indies, and they met either with an open or a clandeſtine countenance, in all the ports where their prizes were carried.

They now infeſted the coaſts of Great Britain and Ireland with an audaciouſneſs that equally aſtoniſhed and perplexed the whole nation. Their language, appearance and manners being the ſame, they could not be diſtinguiſhed from the people of the Britiſh iſlands. Thus whenever it was requiſite, they aſſumed the ſhape of Britiſh ſubjects, and were by ſuch means enabled to perpetrate much miſchief undiſcovered. The trade between Great Britain and Ireland was interrupted by them to ſuch a degree, that convoys became neceſſary in the narrow channel that ſeparates them.

Another circumſtance happened at the ſame time, which afforded great cauſe of indignation to thoſe who felt for the naval honour and the commercial intereſt of the nation. Numbers of foreign veſſels, ſome of which were even French, were freighted by Britiſh merchants, for the purpoſe of carrying on their own trade with ſecurity, and protecting it from the American cruizers.

America did not, however, eſcape the vengeance of Britain: its navy and privateers exerted themſelves

ſelves with ſuch activity, that the loſſes of the Colonies, though ſmall at the commencement of hoſtilities by ſea, became gradually much greater, and were more ſeverely felt than thoſe of Britain.—As they were unable to afford ſuch powerful protection to their trade as the Britiſh had the advantage of receiving, from ſailing under convoy, their hazards were much greater; and though the prizes taken from them were commonly of inconſiderable value ſingly, yet the vaſt numbers that were captured, many of which were valuable, more than ſufficiently balanced the damage done by their privateers.

France, in the courſe of this year, began to act a leſs covert and circumſpect part than ſhe had done hitherto, and to manifeſt in a manner that left no room for doubt, what were ultimately her deſigns with reſpect to Great Britain. Her naval preparations, however, not being ſufficiently matured, nor the ſituation of affairs in America brought to that point ſhe had in view, it was thought wiſeſt in thoſe who guided her councils, to extend her diſſimulation to a longer term, though indeed it was ſo viſible, that it could hardly deſerve the name.

The Britiſh miniſtry, juſtly irritated at this ignominious duplicity of conduct, acted upon a variety of occaſions with ſuch explicit firmneſs, as left the Court of France no option between an abſolute rupture and the redreſs of the grievances complained of. When preſſed in this cloſe and peremptory manner, the French miniſtry gave way, and made ſatisfactory conceſſions in words. But they were not accompanied with any reality; the ſame inimical ſyſtem of conduct continuing without any effectual variation.

In this manner France temporiſed, according to the long eſtabliſhed practice of her government; leſt by precipitating matters, Britain might be roused

rouſed ſooner than was convenient for the ſchemes ſhe had long been projecting, and had almoſt brought to the period intended for their diſcloſal.

Among other inſtances of this double-dealing, the following was peculiarly remarkable:—The commander of an American privateer, named Cunningham, a bold and adventurous man, took the Engliſh packet from Holland, and carried her into Dunkirk, from whence he diſpatched the mail to the American agents at Paris. As the veſſel he commanded had been fitted out at Dunkirk, on complaint being made by the Britiſh miniſtry of the infraction of the peace and amity ſubſiſting between both countries, he was committed to priſon, together with his ſhip's company: but this impriſonment laſted but a ſhort time; and was excuſed to the Americans, as owing to the want of ſome formality in his commiſſion, and to impropriety of conduct on his part; by which he had ſubjected himſelf to the animadverſion of the law. But while this appearance of ſatisfaction was given to the Britiſh miniſtry, on the one hand, the fulleſt countenance was ſhew to the American privateer on the other. He was not only ſoon ſet at liberty from this pretended impriſonment, but allowed to purchaſe and equip a much ſtouter veſſel than the other, to the manifeſt intent of cruizing againſt the Engliſh.

This breach of faith was ſtill more glaring, as it proved of greater detriment to Britain, upon a more important occaſion. Incenſed at the encouragement given to the American privateers, the Court of Great Britain directed Lord Stormont, the Britiſh Ambaſſador at Paris, to demand an order from the French miniſtry, that all the American privateers ſhould depart the kingdom, together with their prizes. The application was made when the French ſhipping, employed in the Newfoundland fiſhery, were all out upon that ſtation. Had they

refuſed

refuſed to comply with the requeſt, they foreſaw that an immediate rupture would have been probably the conſequence, and that this whole fleet would, in all likelihood, have fallen into the hands of the Engliſh; by which they would have been deprived of an immenſe number of the beſt ſeamen in France. They acquieſced, therefore, in the requeſt, until the arrival of this valuable fleet had quieted their apprehenſions for its ſafety. After which they deviſed ſuch a variety of pretexts to defer the execution of this order, that not a ſingle American veſſel was diſmiſſed from any of their ports.

But ſo firmly were the French miniſtry determined to afford all poſſible encouragement to the Americans, that they publicly aſſured the whole body of merchants throughout the kingdom, that they might depend upon the moſt effectual protection of any trade they might carry on in their own bottoms with the produce of America. This happened in the month of July.

In the mean time the moſt vigorous and open preparations were making in all the dock-yards of France. Her intentions were ſo manifeſt, that all Europe was amazed at the paſſiveneſs with which Great Britain viewed and permitted them, and concluded that it muſt proceed from the conſcientiouſneſs of her internal weakneſs, and total inability to prevent them.

The general opinion of politicians was, that on taking the final determination to ſubdue her Colonies by force of arms, Great Britain ſhould at the ſame time have come to an open rupture with France, which, it could not be doubted, would ſupport the Americans in their preſent quarrel. There would have been no deficiency of reaſons for ſuch a meaſure: the conduct of the French in the Weſt Indies, afforded ample cauſe for the juſtification of ſuch a ſtep. She would then have been taken unprepared;

pared: what force ſhe had at ſea was inconſiderable; and ſhe was not in a condition to equip any formidable armament, from the neglect of her marine, the diſorder her finances were left in at the demiſe of the late king, and the unſettled ſtate of her affairs in general ſince the acceſſion of the preſent.

Such were the reaſonings of all the judicious people on the continent, who wiſhed well to this country. They clearly foreſaw that France would not omit ſo inviting an opportunity of diſmembering the Britiſh empire, and would uſe her utmoſt diligence to co-operate in ſo deſirable a work. They were of courſe aſtoniſhed that Britain could heſitate to attack an enemy, that was unqueſtionably meditating all the miſchief in his power, before he was in readineſs to execute it. No valid motives could be alledged for ſuch a delay. There was no medium between a reconciliation with the Colonies, or proceeding directly to hoſtilities with France.

In the midſt of theſe preparations on the ſide of France, and the alarm they begun at length to create in the minds of the Britiſh miniſtry, the hopes they had conceived of General Burgoyne's expedition, began gradually to abate. They received ſucceſſively ſuch accounts, as foreboded no favourable iſſue to his operations. The fatal cataſtrophe that befel him, was not, however, apprehended. Were he to fail in the main object in view, ſtill it was hoped he would be able to accompliſh it in part; or if that could not be effected, no ſuſpicion exiſted that he would not be able to make good his retreat. A total diſcomfiture of an army of European veterans, never entered into the conceptions even of thoſe who thought moſt favourably of the Americans; eſpecially after hearing with what quickneſs and facility they had been overpowered in the beginning of the campaign, and with what

importance to be taken from them, at a time when they knew no efforts ſhould have been wanting to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy.

While the minds of people were ſuſpended betwee hope and apprehenſion, how the campaign would terminate in America, the ſeſſion of Parliament was opened on the twentieth of November. The principal intent of the Royal ſpeech, was to aſſure the Houſes, that the powers entruſted to the Crown for the ſuppreſſion of the troubles in America, had been faithfully exerted; but that the contingencies of war would render further exertions neceſſary.

The members who ſupported the miniſtry in the Houſe of Commons, were very warm in urging the neceſſity of continuing the meaſures now employed in America for its reduction; they expreſſed the fulleſt confidence that the ability, prudence, and ſpirit of the commanders, with the valour and diſcipline of the Britiſh troops, would ſhortly triumph over all reſiſtance: they aſſerted, that no man born in this country, and bred in a due attachment to its excellent conſtitution, could be juſtified in ſtanding up in that Houſe to expreſs a diſſent from the line of action now adopted reſpecting the Colonies, and that factiouſneſs alone could diſapprove of them. An addreſs was therefore moved, in approbation of the ſpeech.

The members in the oppoſition, were no leſs ſtrenuous in repreſenting the ruinous effects of the unnatural war between Great Britain and her Colonies, and the fatal conſequences which were on the point of following it. It was obſerved, that the ſtrength of this country had been fully and vigorouſly, and yet ineffectually exerted, in order to obtain peace at the point of the ſword. The merit of the Britiſh Generals and officers, and the bravery of their ſoldiers,

diers, were unqueſtionable; but the nature of the war was ſuch, as to defeat all their plans: the obſtacles they met with, daily augmented: they were inherent to the country, and would in all likelihood prove inſurmountable: it was time, therefore, to abandon the project of coercion, and try an oppoſite method. The grandeur, the intereſt, the preſervation of what ſhould be deareſt to the people of Britain, depended upon a ceſſation of their unfortunate quarrel. After having fruitleſsly employed the ſword, it was now the duty of miniſters "to have recourſe to bonds of amity for the minds, inſtead of forging chains for the bodies of the Americans." Terms of amity and reciprocal benefit ought to be held out to them, while the fate of war was ſtill undecided, and the honour of the nation yet unſullied by diſgraces, that would render an accommodation no longer a matter of choice, but of humiliating neceſſity.

To this purpoſe an amendment to the addreſs was moved; the ſubſtance of which was, a requeſt for the ceſſation of hoſtilities, and the adoption of neceſſary meaſures to terminate the differences with America.

In ſupport of this amendment it was further alledged, that after carrying on an expenſive war during the ſpace of three years, notwithſtanding a force of near ſixty thouſand men by land, and a fleet of a hundred ſhips of war, we were no further advanced, than when we begun. Our armies, with all the courage of the ſoldiers, and all the abilities of the commanders, had done nothing deciſive. The army under Sir William Howe, was, indeed, maſter of the field; but the lateſt news from that on the frontiers of New England, repreſented it in very precarious circumſtances.

In the idea of obtaining a revenue from America, we had already expended much more than it could have

have amounted to in the courſe of many years, on a ſuppoſition that America would have aſſented to our utmoſt demands. Were a pacification to take place, it would be found, at the final concluſion of all that related to the war, that the charges attending it, or reſulting from it, would produce an addition of more than thirty millions to the national debt.

The loſſes and diſtreſſes of the public were daily increaſing; intereſt roſe, and ſtocks fell in a very alarming proportion; the value of eſtates diminiſhed: theſe were facts that could not be combated. The circumſtances of the mercantile and trading claſſes had received no leſs a ſhock; failures and bankruptcies beyond all former precedents, ſhewed to what a degree the nation was injured by this unfortunate conteſt. The loſs of our commerce with the continent of America, the damages ſuſtained in the Weſt India iſlands, the vaſt diminution of our fiſhery at Newfoundland, of our trade in the Levant, the Mediterranean, and on the coaſt of Africa, were neceſſary conſequences of this fatal quarrel. All theſe were grievous conſiderations; but they would be followed with ſtill greater cauſes of ſorrow, unleſs the quarrel was terminated before the Houſe of Bourbon entered into it. This, it were an inſult to the commoneſt underſtanding, to make a doubt of at this juncture. If, therefore, this country found it ſo difficult to maintain the conteſt againſt the Colonies alone, how could it be expected that the powerful enemies that were preparing to aſſail us on every ſide, could poſſibly, in conjunction with them, be reſiſted?

The reply of miniſtry was, that peace, however deſirable, was neither to be obtained nor wiſhed for upon humiliating conditions. To propoſe it at any other ſeaſon than that of victory, would be to proſtitute the honour of the nation to no purpoſe. While

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the leaſt ſhadow of ſucceſs attended the reſiſtance of America, it would never make any of thoſe conceſſions, without which Great Britain could not conſent to a pacification, without abſolute diſgrace.

A ceſſation of arms was condemned, as the worſt of all policy. By temporizing, we gave the Americans further leiſure to prepare for a continuation of their reſiſtance; and if they were to be aſſiſted from abroad in the manner prognoſticated by oppoſition, ſuch a meaſure would afford time to the enemy to come to their aſſiſtance.

There was ſtrong reaſon to believe, that affairs would ſoon be ſettled to the ſatisfaction of this country. The expence of reſiſting the power of Britain was ſuch, that Congreſs was now ſinking under the burthen: the bounties given for the procurement of ſoldiers, were exceſſive, and alone would weigh them to the ground. This very exceſs was an incontrovertible proof, with what repugnance the people at large took up arms againſt this country, and how eaſy it would be, with judicious management, to prevail upon them to abandon that body of men, and return to their former allegiance to the parent ſtate; eſpecially when they came to reflect on their paſt happineſs, and preſent miſery.

In the courſe of this debate, the employing of the Indians was animadverted upon in the ſevereſt terms. They were repreſented as of no other uſe than to exerciſe the moſt inhuman barbarities upon the vanquiſhed, without diſtinction of age or ſex. It was infamous in a civilized people to admit of ſuch mercileſs ſavages for allies. Nothing had given more provocation to the Americans. It ſhewed that we had loſt all feeling for them; and that if we could not compel them to ſubmit, we were determined to ſet no bounds to our vengeance, and to give up to murder and deſtruction all ſuch as had the misfortune to fall into our hands. It had united them,

them, from motives of the moſt urgent neceſſity, the defence of all that is deareſt to human nature, their wives, children, and families. We were hated before; but we now were become objects of execration.

To this it was replied, that it was unjuſt to repreſent the employing of the Indians in ſo opprobrious a light. The emiſſaries of Congreſs had ſtrongly urged them to take up arms for the Americans, before we had applied to them. If, therefore, any infamy could ariſe from ſuch a meaſure, it fell equally on both parties.

Thoſe who ſeemed on this day moſt diſpleaſed and diſappointed, were thoſe members of the Houſe, known by the denomination of Country Gentlemen. Their votes and concurrence in miniſterial meaſures had long been founded on the expectation of deriving a regular and conſiderable revenue from the Colonies. They now beheld an end of all their expectations, and found themſelves involved in the ſupport of a war, the principle of which ſome of them began to complain could hardly be defined. The emoluments derivable from it, would not certainly prove equivalent to the expences which it occaſioned, eſpecially as the duration of it did not promiſe to be ſhort. From every concomitance that appeared, it threatened to be the moſt expenſive, the moſt fruitleſs, and the moſt dangerous war that ever this country had undertaken to wage.

It was in reality a point of falſe honour for which the nation was now contending. Which ever of the two parties obtained the advantage in this diſpute, nothing beſides imaginary ſatisfaction would accrue from it: profit was entirely out of proſpect. Blood would be ſhed, and money would be profuſed to no other end, than to leave both combatants in a ſtate of debility, from which they would be many years in recovering. Should reconciliation enſue upon

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the terms inſiſted upon by Great Britain, ſhould even this reconciliation, by the judicious management, and the moderation of the Britiſh miniſtry, be made ſatisfactory and acceptable to the Colonies, ſtill the immenſe ſums expended by this country to obtain this end, would render it far leſs deſirable than a treaty of accommodation at the preſent period upon almoſt any terms.

Such were the ideas of ſeveral of thoſe who were eſteemed the moderate part of the Houſe. But the miniſterial party continued ſtill the ſtrongeſt. The addreſs was carried by a majority of two hundred and forty-three, to eighty-ſix.

In the Houſe of Lords, the addreſs which was moved in approbation of the ſpeech, was oppoſed with great vehemence. Lord Chatham appeared again on this occaſion; and, though worn down with infirmities, exerted himſelf in ſuch a manner, as ſhewed that his great abilities had not forſaken him. He condemned the addreſs upon the ſame principles the oppoſition in the Houſe of Commons had done, and recommended an amendment of the ſame nature.

But his arguments and eloquence were loſt. The pre-determination to reject all ſuch propoſals, was proof againſt all that could be urged in their favour; and he now experienced the truth of what he had long dreaded and foretold would come to paſs,—that party attachments, uninfluenced by reaſonings, would decide all parliamentary queſtions, and enſlave the nation to undue influence.

Such was the complaint of that part of the public which adhered to his opinions. They expreſſed great indignation at the ſlight which was ſhewn to the judgment of ſuch a man. It was hard, ſaid they, that he to whom the Britiſh nation was ſo deeply indebted for the proſperity and grandeur to which it had attained, ſhould be ſo ſoon after the

witnefs of its decline; but it was harder ſtill, that he ſhould live to ſee the day, when the great ſervices he had rendered to his country ſhould be undervalued, or forgotten; when his advice ſhould be received with a neglect, bordering upon contempt, and his perſonal character treated with indifference, if not with diſreſpect.

The warmth they felt and expreſſed in the behalf of this illuſtrious nobleman, was the greater, as the diſcourſe he made on this occaſion, was, in their perſuaſion, equally judicious and animated; and founded upon truths, which none but the venal, the uninformed, or the weak-minded, would call in queſtion. It was reprobated, ſaid they, becauſe it contained facts and allegations, the mention of which could not fail being hateful to thoſe whom they covered with ſhame, and expoſed to the ignominy they deſerved.

Never indeed was Lord Chatham known to expreſs himſelf with more freedom and fervour. Parliaments, he ſaid, once knew their own dignity too well to ſuffer themſelves to be led in the diſgraceful manner to which they now ſubmitted. They once thought themſelves entitled to guide, inſtead of yielding implicitly to the direction of miniſters. The Houſe of Lords, in particular, ought to remember that it had been uſual to aſk their advice: they were the hereditary great council of the nation, and it ill became any individual to aſſume the province of dictating to them. But in lieu of this proper and conſtitutional method of proceeding, they were now informed of meaſures pre-concerted without their participation; and to which, nevertheleſs, their concurrence was requeſted. Miniſtry built upon events, the uncertainty of which was notorious, and called upon them to aſſiſt in the plans erected on that precarious ground, in a ſtile that was dictatorial, and precluded all deliberation. This

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was not the language with which the miniſters of this free country ſhould preſume to approach its guardians and repreſentatives. Mean muſt theſe be to endure ſuch treatment, after having been ſo long and ſo invariably deceived, and led into ſuch a complication of difficulties, through the repeated errors and incurable preſumption of theſe miniſters. Diſappointments and misfortunes of every kind had conſtantly attended all their meaſures, and yet they had the confidence to rely upon the ſupport of a public which they had ſo grievouſly offended, and of which they had ſacrificed the evident intereſt to a ſyſtem which reaſon and argument had fully demonſtrated, knowledge and ſagacity clearly had foreſeen, and now fatal experience had completely proved to be pregnant with certain ruin to this country.

The noble empire of Britain was now doomed to ruin by the unſkilfulneſs and incapacity of thoſe who were unhappily entruſted with the management of its concerns, and the pride and haughtineſs of the councils by which they were influenced. After advancing ſtep by ſtep in a track which they were continually admoniſhed, not merely by their opponents in this country, but by the united voice of all the politicians in Europe, would infallibly conduct them to perdition, they ſtill perſiſted in it, even in ſpite of the ſevere chaſtiſement they had met with in thoſe calamities they had brought upon their country. If ſuch men could be ſuppoſed capable of liſtening to advice after having ſo long deſpiſed it, they ought now to be told, that unleſs they immediately receded from the meaſures they were purſuing, they would next have to account for the entire downfall of this kingdom. It was abſolutely inevitable in the natural courſe of cauſes and effects. Did miniſters flatter themſelves that the united ſtrength of the Houſe of Bourbon, added to that of America, and of ſuch powers as

would abet them, and take this occaſion of quarrelling with us, would not outweigh that of Britain, forſaken as ſhe appeared manifeſtly to be, and left alone to face ſuch numerous and potent enemies?

An opening however ſtill remained for accommodation. France and Spain, though ſufficiently inimical to Britain, had not gone thoſe lengths in their aſſiſtance which had been required by the Americans. The diſſatisfaction they felt was an opportunity not to be neglected. Now, therefore, was the ſeaſon to wean them from the connection they had formed with thoſe two courts, by making ſuch overtures, as from their reaſonableneſs would not be rejected. This ought to be done without delay; thoſe powers knew their intereſt too well to refuſe any requeſt on the part of America, were the refuſal to endanger their ſchemes againſt Britain: but their compliance would probably be accompanied with ſuch terms, as would then render an accommodation with America impracticable upon the conditions that might yet be obtained.

Lord Chatham was ably ſeconded by the Lords in oppoſition. Their arguments were chiefly grounded on the danger to which the nation would infallibly be expoſed, in encountering ſuch a multitude of enemies as threatened to ariſe from all parts, in caſe of a further proſecution of the war. The intentions of the Houſe of Bourbon were ſo plain, that it would be an affront to the common ſenſe of the public, to affect ſecurity from that quarter. However fair the language of thoſe courts might continue to be, their deeds beſpoke nothing but the moſt hoſtile deſigns; and their enmity was of ſo radical and hereditary a nature, that it was not to be expected they would refrain from indulging it on the moſt tempting occaſion that ever had been, or could be offered, of humbling that enemy who had ſo often, and ſo lately humbled them.

An appeal was made by the Lords in oppoſition to the bench of Biſhops. They were conjured; as men whoſe profeſſion enjoined them particularly an abhorrence of blood, to intereſt themſelves in a manner becoming their function and character, in the cauſe of peace, and by no means to abet the ſanguinary proceedings that had taken place in America.

The employing of the Indians was adverted to with peculiar acrimony. The ſame arguments were adduced againſt this meaſure as had been uſed in the Houſe of Commons, and were enforced by Lord Chatham in the concluſion of his ſpeech, with great warmth, and energy of thought and language.

To the various allegations urged againſt miniſtry, replies were made much in the ſame ſtrain as thoſe employed in their favour in the Lower Houſe. It was particularly noticed, that the alliance formed with the Indians was the reſult of neceſſity: they were the original natives and poſſeſſors of the country; connections had ſubſiſted between them and the Engliſh and French ſucceſſively; they had, as neighbouring nations, been applied to for aſſiſtance by each, in the many wars between both. True it was, they were a blood-thirſty and mercileſs people; but the knowledge of this was an additional motive to thoſe who were conſcious of it, not to expoſe themſelves to the conſequences of their barbarous diſpoſition, and to avoid them by a due and timely ſubmiſſion.

Among other remarks on this ſubject, it was obſerved, that miniſtry could in no wiſe be blamed for endeavouring to ſtrengthen the hands of their adherents in the Colonies, and of thoſe who were fighting the battles of the nation there, by every method that policy ſuggeſted; and therefore were juſtly entitled to employ, for the obtaining of this end, thoſe means which God and nature had put in their power.

This latter expreſſion was vehemently reprehended by the oppoſition. It was taken up with peculiar ſeverity by Lord Chatham, and repreſented in the moſt criminal and atrocious light. He lamented the times, that had made ſuch an alteration in the maxims and feelings of humanity which had hitherto diſtinguiſhed the people of this country in ſo honourable a manner from all others. It was with equal ſhame and grief he ſaw the character of his countrymen tainted with ſo much baſeneſs and barbarity. Thoſe who avowed ſuch principles in the Houſe of Peers, ought to recollect that what fell from their lips did not fall to the ground; it was circulated throughout the nation, and left an indelible impreſſion on the memory of thoſe who heard it, whenever the excellence, the ſingularity, or the ſcandalous and evil tendency of what was ſpoken, made it any ways remarkable. He would venture to ſay, that what he had heard upon this occaſion would equally aſtoniſh and offend every humane and liberal mind, and bring diſgrace upon every individual, however exalted, that would dare to give it countenance.

After a moſt violent and acrimonious debates, the motion in favour of the addreſs was carried, by a majority of ninety-ſeven votes, to no more than twenty-eight.

It had been aſſerted in the preceding debates, that the navy was in a ſtrong and flouriſhing condition, fully adequate to the reſiſtance of any naval force which the enemies of this country might poſſeſs, and amply ſufficient to quiet the apprehenſions of thoſe who ſuſpected inimical deſigns from the ancient and natural enemies of this country.

This repreſentation was made in anſwer to thoſe who inſiſted on the neceſſity of terminating the hoſtilities in America, from the obviouſneſs of the danger to which the realm was expoſed, from the undoubted

undoubted intentions of France to aſſiſt the Americans.

But this repreſentation did not ſilence thoſe who were of a diſpoſition to require proofs of ſo flattering an aſſertion. They demanded an inquiry, and inſiſted upon ſuch an expoſition of facts as might remove all ſuſpicion of matters being otherwiſe than they had been ſo confidently ſtated.

The reaſon they aſſigned for this demand was, that ſuch an elucidation would revive the ſpirit of the nation, and depreſs that of its enemies in the moſt effectual manner. It would reſtore that confidence to miniſtry, which the ſuſpicions univerſally prevalent of the neglected condition of the navy had ſo greatly diminiſhed; and it would have a ſtill more important effect, by deterring our enemies from the purſuit of the deſigns they were forming againſt us, when they perceived our ability to fruſtrate them.

They who oppoſed the demand, contended that a particular ſpecification of the circumſtances of the Britiſh navy, would be an act of the higheſt imprudence: it would be pointing out to the enemy where its deficiencies lay. No department, however carefully managed and well conditioned, was without its flaws. The ſtrength and power of ſtates conſiſted, in a great meaſure, in the ſecrecy and cloſeneſs with which its affairs were conducted.—They were ſhallow politicians who imagined that a manifeſtation of the exact ſtate of our navy could anſwer any other purpoſe than to inſtruct our enemies in what manner to do it moſt detriment, and lay us open at the ſame time to the blame of all the judicious part of the world, for our weakneſs and want of diſcretion.

The miniſtry was however ſo cloſely preſſed upon this matter, that a ſtatement of the preſent condition of the navy was conſented to. But when the

buſineſs came into diſcuſſion, the aſſertions on each ſide were ſo contradictory, that no inſight into the affairs of that department was obtained that could with ſafety be depended on.

A motion being made in the Committee of Supply, 'that ſixty thouſand ſeamen ſhould be voted for the enſuing year,' it occaſioned loud complaints that a prolongation of the American war was plainly intended by the making of ſuch a requiſition. It ſhowed, too, ſaid they, how much the miniſtry had deceived the nation, or had been deceived themſelves, by aſſerting, ſeſſion after ſeſſion, that nothing was to be apprehended from abroad, and that we might proſecute what meaſures we thought proper reſpecting America, without any fear of interruption or moleſtation upon that account.

Such, however, was the conſciouſneſs of the imminent danger to which the kingdom was expoſed, that the motion was agreed to without a diviſion.

As the bill paſſed during the laſt ſeſſion for ſuſpending, in ſome caſes, the Habeas Corpus Act, was now expiring, the continuation of it was moved, for the ſame reaſons alledged on its firſt paſſing.

This motion excited anew the diſcontent of thoſe who had oppoſed it when firſt propoſed. They alledged that its operations ought to be made known before an acquieſcence could reaſonably be expected to the preſent motion. In order, therefore, to remove any doubt of its propriety, and to clear it from any ſuſpicion of harſhneſs and oppreſſion, it was moved by oppoſition on the other ſide, that a return ſhould be made of the priſoners, and an account given of the priſons in which they were confined, whether in Great Britain or America, with copies of their commitments, ſpecifying the bail offered for their enlargement, and the proceedings of the Privy Council purſuant to the powers veſted

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in them. This return included all perſons committed for high treaſon ſince the affair at Lexington.

This motion was aſſented to by miniſtry, the friends of which obſerved, that an inquiry of this kind would fully evince how little adminiſtration was inclined to treat any individuals with unneceſſary ſeverity, and how ready to give all reaſonable ſatisfaction to ſuch as required proofs of the propriety of their conduct, and the uprightneſs of their intentions.

The reaſons alledged by oppoſition for a diſcontinuance of the bill, were, that no ſort of neceſſity appeared for the precautions it alluded to. No effect had been produced by it, as none of thoſe evils had happened which it was intended to remedy.—It was therefore uſeleſs; and being otherwiſe of a dangerous tendency to public freedom, ought not to be allowed of, but in caſes of the extremeſt neceſſity.

It was argued, on the ſide of miniſtry, that the very motive mentioned by oppoſition for diſcontinuing the bill, was a proof of its expediency. It had prevented thoſe evils which would otherwiſe have happened, and muſt have been ſeverely puniſhed. Its continuance was therefore highly expedient, as it contributed ſo effectually to domeſtic tranquility.

After a variety of arguments, much to the ſame effect, a continuance of the bill was voted by a majority of one hundred and ſixteen, to ſixty.

The next ſubject wherein America became again an object of diſcuſſion, was the land-tax. Here the diſputants on either ſide renewed that immenſe variety of argumentation which had for years been repeated to ſo little purpoſe. The inutility of warring in America for the purpoſes of taxation, was enforced from the impracticability of raiſing a revenue out of a country that had no money, and which ought

ought to be conſidered as in a ſtate of abſolute deſolation. It was now ſo much impoveriſhed, as not to offer the leaſt rational hope of being able to contribute in the leaſt to the public exigencies of the empire. Its own were ſo preſſing, that were Britain to obtain the point it propoſed, and reduce the Colonies to ſubmiſſion, the wounds they had received in this conteſt muſt firſt be healed, ere we could carry our revenue ſchemes into execution.

It was further obſerved on this occaſion, that matters were now come to that woeful extremity, that were a peace to take place that inſtant, and America conſent to the moſt implicit ſubjection to this country, it would require a length of years for a re-ſettlement of affairs upon their former footing. The only benefit that could reſult from a pacification at the preſent moment, would be a ceſſation from blood and carnage. Thoſe who expected more, had not attended to the miſchiefs which the violence of the times had perpetrated on both ſides. They were great in America, but they were greater ſtill in Britain. Here, indeed, the lands had not been laid waſte, nor the towns and cities reduced to aſhes, but immenſe funds of future proſperity had been laviſhed for the purpoſes of deſtruction, and were now loſt for ever. It had been calculated that larger ſums had been expended in conſequence of this unhappy altercation than would have ſufficed to purchaſe, and bring to the completeſt improvement, all the uncultivated lands in the kingdom.

After a variety of obſervations of this nature, it was concluded, that in order to arrive at a proper and well-founded knowledge of the queſtion ſo often agitated,—the propriety of continuing the American war, an examination of the means by which it was to be ſupported, ſeemed indiſpenſibly neceſſary. It was a direct and obvious method; it led

led ſtraight to the point, and would at once enable men to come to a clear deciſion.

But an examination of this kind including a cloſe inſpection into numerous particulars, and an accurate view of all tranſactions relating to this important object, nothing leſs than a careful inquiry into the preſent ſtate and circumſtances of the nation could anſwer the purpoſe propoſed.

Such were the ſentiments delivered on this occaſion by Mr. Fox, whoſe extraordinary abilities had already been oftentimes exercifed in the many debates concerning American affairs.

He moved for a Committee of the whole Houſe, to take into conſideration the ſtate of the nation.—The objects he principally recommended to their attention, were the expences incurred by the war, and the reſources remaining to raiſe the ſupplies for its continuance, the loſſes it had occaſioned, the commercial ſituation of this couutry in conſequence of it, the preſent aſpect of the war, what hopes of ſucceſs it afforded, the conduct of miniſtry relating to it, the means of re-eſtabliſhing tranquility, the ſituation of Britain reſpecting foreign powers, and the progreſs made in America towards a reconciliation by the Commiſſioners appointed for that purpoſe.

Theſe were the outlines of the inquiry. Other particulars of leſs importance were alſo mentioned, as deſerving of inveſtigation. That ſufficient time might be afforded to procure the various papers and documents requiſite for ſuch an inquiry, he propoſed that the committee ſhould be fixed for the ſecond [illegible]ebruary, two months from the preſent day.

The motion for an inquiry into the ſtate of the nation being complied with, Mr. Fox followed it with another to requeſt that the papers relating to the tranſactions of the Commiſſioners in America, ſhould be laid before the Houſe. But this was refuſed by miniſtry. The ground for this refuſal was, that

that it would be diſcloſing matters of which the knowledge would prove highly prejudicial to many individuals. As much ſhould be made known as was conſiſtent with their ſafety, and with the general rules of diſcretion in affairs that required ſecrecy; but an entire and unreſerved diſcloſal of tranſactions wherein ſo much ought to remain concealed, would obviouſly be productive of detriment to the buſineſs in agitation.

On the following day, which was the third of December, the diſaſter of the army under General Burgoyne, was notified to the Houſe. Great was the grief and concern which it excited; but the reproaches which it drew on the miniſtry, were not leſs. Their imprudence, their obſtinacy, their preſumption, were the ſource of this, and of all the calamities that had befallen, and were ſtill awaiting this country. A fatality attended all their proceedings. At home they had incurred the odium, and the contempt of all the judicious part of the community; abroad they had involved the affairs of the nation in utter confuſion. It was engaged in a ſanguinary quarrel with the inhabitants of a conſiderable part of the empire, and was expoſed to the inſults and ill treatment of all its neighbours.

With expreſſions and complaints of this nature, was that fatal intelligence received by the members of the oppoſition. The favourers of miniſtry were, upon this occaſion, ſtruck with ſilence and dejection. The fact was, indeed, of ſo melancholy a nature, that both parties were equally affected. It was a national calamity, and as ſuch, could not fail being deeply felt by an aſſembly of men, who, however they might differ in opinion concerning public meaſures, muſt naturally be ſuppoſed to have ſincerely at heart the welfare of their country.

There were ſome, however, who did not join in this general deſpondency. They ſeemed, on the contrary,

contrary, to feel a ſtronger determination to purſue vigorous meaſures, and to act, if poſſible, with more reſolution than before. They reprobated, with great energy of language, that readineſs to deſpair of the commonwealth, to which ſome were inclined from the weakneſs and timidity of their diſpoſition, and which others affected from motives of party. It was not, ſaid they, with ſuch feeble ſentiments, that a people with whom the Britiſh nation delights to compare itſelf, was uſed to meet adverſity. When fifty thouſand Romans had been cut to pieces at Cannæ, not above two or three days journey from Rome, the ſenate did not expreſs more alarm than was now felt or pretended, at the capture of no more than five thouſand men, at the diſtance of three thouſand miles, on the other ſide of the ocean.

Certain it is, that the news of the misfortune that had befallen General Burgoyne, was received with much more concern, and occaſioned much greater affliction, than became the character of the Britiſh nation. It was undoubtedly a ſevere diſappointment; but the diſcouragement reſulting from it, was much greater than the real detriment which the public ſuſtained by that unfortunate event.

On the fourth of December, the Committee of Supply reported, that the ſum of ſix hundred and eighty-three thouſand pounds would be wanted for the expences of the office of Ordnance, in the enſuing year. The immenſity of the demand roufed all the fire of oppoſition. It was aſked, whether miniſtry did ſeriouſly believe that the reſources of this country were adequate to the charges of a war, of which only one ſingle department called for ſuch a conſumption of money? The ſum demanded, exceeded by one hundred and forty thouſand pounds, that which was expended in the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and fifty-nine; the moſt active, important, and ſucceſsful year of the late glorious war.

We

We then maintained near three hundred thouſand fighting-men, and our operations were extended to every quarter of the globe. It was incomprehenſible, therefore, how ſo vaſt a ſum as that which was at preſent required, could be wanted, when the number of men employed amounted to no more than eighty thouſand, and our Colonies were the only theatre of hoſtility.

Mr. Burke, in particular, was very preſſing on this ſubject, and diſplayed much knowledge, as well as eloquence, in the manner in which he treated it. Receiving no anſwer to the ſeveral interrogations he had made relating to the buſineſs in debate, and the Speaker preparing to put the queſtion, he declared with great firmneſs and reſolution, that the queſtion ſhould not be put, till miniſtry had given ſome ſatisfactory explanation on ſo weighty a ſubject. The expence and the ſervice for which it was intended, bore no manner of proportion, and could not be reconciled.

In anſwer to theſe queſtions, which were reiterated with great vigour, it was replied on the ſide of miniſtry, that the extraordinary expence of this department, was owing to the extremely hoſtile diſpoſition of the country where the war was waging. No ſupplies of any kind could be purchaſed there, and every article requiſite for this branch of the ſervice muſt be tranſported thither from home. This neceſſarily created a prodigious expence, unprecedented in any former wars.

It was alſo obſerved, that in the laſt war the foreign troops in the pay of Great Britain, provided their own ammunition. This made a part of the contracts formed with them, and did not enter into the accounts of the Board of Ordnance, which of conſequence fell incomparably ſhort of what they muſt have done had ſo vaſt an expenditure been included. True it was, that Great Britain maintained

near three hundred thouſand men in arms during the period that had been mentioned; but the number of Britiſh forces at the time, conſtituted but a part of the whole ſtrength we then employed; and it was only to them the eſtimates of the Board of Ordnance related.

Such an explanation, it was replied by oppoſition, ſhewed at once what was to be expected from the continuance of a war, the very nature of which was ſo much more deſtructive than any that had ever preceded. Every branch of expence ariſing from it, was carried to the verieſt extremity of exceſs. Stipulations with foreigners, or contracts with our own people, were equally onerous. They alike took advantage of the many real, and many pretended difficulties they found in complying with the terms of their reſpective agreements, to burden us with the moſt enormous expences.

END OF VOL. II.